

LABOR AGE

THE VOICE OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR

The Negro Worker

A Vital Problem.....Abram L. Harris

A Challenge to A. F. of L.....Elmer A. Carter

THE DIXIE CRUSADE

William Ross

Hoover's "Economic Planning"

C. P. L. A. Statement

FEBRUARY, 1930

25 CENTS

LABOR AGE

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IN THIS ISSUE

ACHING bodies "tired of livin' an' feared of dyin'" turn to "Ol' Man River" with wonderment and yearning as a surcease from the hopeless struggle. "Ol' Man River," the song which made the musical comedy, Show Boat, famous, is more than a song. It is a vivid portrayal of Negro exploitation and in this issue, introduces the problem of Negro organization.

RACE prejudice has always been encouraged by ruling classes to keep the ranks of exploited labor divided for the security of its privileges. The task of the workers is to undo the harm created by fear and misunderstanding, to wipe out imaginary differences and to bring together "the brothers united in toil" for their better advancement. In "The Negro Worker—A Problem of Vital Concern to the Entire Labor Movement," Abram L. Harris, Department of Economics, Howard University, goes back a little distance to give the background of the industrialization of the Negro, presents the status of the Negro today as far as organization is concerned, and outlines a program of action that will combine black and white into an inclusive Labor Movement that can march successfully towards the goal of social and economic equality.

THE American Federation of Labor has thrown down the gauge of battle to the Southern mill barons. Into Birmingham, the heart of the industrial south, it is introducing itself by opening up headquarters for the Southern campaign. Of the 135,608 skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers of this city tabulated in the 1920 census, 56,384 or 41 per cent, are Negroes. Elmer Anderson Carter, Editor of OPPORTUNITY, a "Journal of Negro Life," and official organ of the National Urban League, presents the statistic-

al data of the role of the Negro worker in American industrial life, factually gives the story of the A. F. of L. official and actual position on the problem of Negro organization and asks the question: Can the South be organized without the Negro? in "Organization of Negro Labor—A Challenge to the A. F. of L."

EVER since the latest trouble started in the Southern Textile area William Ross was on the ground, sometimes much alone and sometimes with the assistance of U. T. W. men and other labor officials, attempting to keep the spark of unionism alive. He was present at the conference in Charlotte, N. C., when the American Federation of Labor opened up its Southern drive. Those interested in the outcome of this historic endeavor—an act considered more important than anything done by American labor within the past twenty-five years, will find his evaluation of the conference and of the men participating in it of effective usefulness in understanding the future developments of this undertaking. William Ross presents his reaction to the conference in "The Dixie Crusade."

THE most effective class rooms, we now understand, are not always those housed in "the little red school house." As a matter of fact, with the advent of adult education and especially of workers education "preparation for life" is at present accepted as a continuous process with the work-room and machine tool as the best equipment for mental integration. "Railway Clerks go to School" by A. J. Muste is a page out of the story of workers education which stands out for its determination to grapple with realities.

NEWs from various sections of the United States, where C. P. L. A. branches are functioning, makes up the major portion of the story "Progressive Cause Advances."

THEN there are the March of the Machine, Flashes From the Labor World, In Other Lands, and Book Reviews to complete this issue.

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Progressive Labor Library Series

PAMPHLET NO. 3

THE NEGRO WORKER

A Problem of Vital Concern to the Entire Labor Movement

By ABRAM L. HARRIS

(A reprint of the article appearing on page 5 of this issue.)

Illustrated and with an appended Outline of Progressive Labor Action

PAMPHLET NO. 1

WHY A LABOR PARTY?

By A. J. MUSTE

PAMPHLET NO. 2

THE MARION MURDER

TOM TIPPETT, FRANCIS J. GORMAN and A. J. MUSTE

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CONFERENCE FOR PROGRESSIVE LABOR ACTION
104 Fifth Avenue, New York City

· LABOR · AGE ·

February, 1930

EDITORIALS

IT was exactly a year ago, in the February, 1929 LABOR AGE, that we published *The Challenge to Progressives*, undoubtedly one of the most significant contributions in years to labor thought and action.

One Year After

The main points in the program for progressives then announced were: 1, Emphasis on organization of the unskilled and semi-skilled in the basic industries into industrial unions. 2, Appeal primarily to the militancy and solidarity of the workers, not to the "good-will" of the boss in organizing efforts. 3, Opposition to National Civic Federation influence in the Labor Movement. 4, Insistence that union membership shall not be denied on grounds of race, or political, social economic or religious views or affiliations. 5, Right of minority or opposition to function in the movement. 6, Aggressive warfare on injunctions and yellow-dog contracts. 7, Social Insurance. 8, Encouragement of co-operative enterprises. 9, Setting forth a new social order as Labor's goal. 10, Working out effective methods of collective bargaining and union control without sacrifice of the union's independence. 11, Five-day week, higher wages, elimination of over-time and night work. 12, Recognition of Soviet Russia. 13, Making the American Labor Movement anti-militaristic and anti-imperialistic. 14, Labor internationalism. 15, Independent labor political action. 16, Development of a genuine workers education movement.

There is no need here for a detailed analysis of these points. LABOR AGE has been carrying that on throughout the year, and will continue to do so. The time for a final appraisal of the soundness and importance of this program has not yet come. We may here make three observations, however. Firstly, there is not a single point in this program which has been seriously challenged, nor has any serious omission been pointed out. Secondly, at a number of points the past year has seen a change of front in the Labor Movement, and noticeable if not yet substantial progress. The National Civic Federation has quieted down considerably, the five-day week and six-hour day movement is making progress, in some unions at least opposition to official policies dares to raise its head again, and the most extensive organizing campaign the A. F. of L. has undertaken in years is under way in the South. Thirdly, on none of the points in the Challenge has a complete victory been won. Progressives must not make the traditional and fatal error of would-be reformers, namely making a noise for a little while, winning some slight gains, perhaps even a smile from the powers that be, and then easing up on the fight and leaving the same old forces and the same old policies in control! We must keep on the job, not be deceived by appearances and not be content with small gains. We must go on with the fight to build a realistic militant, progressive movement in all branches.

THE solution of the problem of the Negro and the labor movement which is featured in this issue of LABOR AGE involves the education of two groups: the white workers and the American Labor Movement on the one hand, and the Negro workers on the other hand.

Interests of Black and White Labor Identical

Officially, the A. F. of L. is on record as opposed to discrimination against Negro workers in the matter of union membership, and favoring the unionization of Negroes in the same manner as whites. In the same way the Constitution of the United States provides that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside, and that their right to vote shall not be denied or abridged "on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude." In labor organizations, as in the nation, however, there are some laws and resolutions which get enforced and some which do not. Negroes are barred from the polling booths in many states in this nation, but the federal government which spends millions of dollars in trying to enforce the 18th amendment, spends nothing to enforce the 14th and 15th amendments for the benefit of Negroes. Similarly, the A. F. of L. has often enough suspended or expelled unions violating a ruling about jurisdiction, and persecuted members holding advanced political and economic views, but it has yet to suspend any international for discriminating against Negroes, or publicly to denounce specifically union officials who actively or passively support such discriminations.

A vigorous campaign of agitation and education to bring the trade union movement to take seriously the A. F. of L. declaration on the Negro is in order. It is particularly timely in view of the organization campaign about to get under way in the South. If the Negroes are to be left out, any claim to having organized the South will be a mockery. What is more, if a permanent division between white workers and Negro workers is to be drawn in that section of the country, that will be preparing for an economic-racial war which would be an indescribable calamity for the South and for the entire nation. If, on the other hand, as white workers are organized, the Negroes are also taken into the union as a matter of course, without any special fuss being made about the race question, the Negroes can be depended upon to come in as rapidly as their white brothers. As the workers, regardless of color, learn to battle together to resist injustice and to achieve the good life, the specter of race war will be exorcised forever.

Negro workers and intellectuals have also, however, to retain a clear position on the economic and labor problem. If it is important that Negroes and whites should be organized together in unions if they are to get their common rights, then it follows that the Negro boss, the Negro poli-

tician, the Negro bought preachers and editors are enemies, as truly as white bosses, politicians, bought preachers and editors. It follows that the Negro worker is a worker and a proletarian first and a Negro second; that it is not to his interest to build up Negro small-capitalism any more than to build up white super-capitalism; that his emancipation and salvation depend on labor organization and solidarity.

Negroes as a separate race cannot possibly achieve independence and power over against the white regime of big business, militarism and imperialism. Negroes as workers along with workers of every race, color, nationality and creed can achieve self-respect, dignity and power in a genuine democracy of the workers, for the workers, by the workers, won through the efforts of organized labor on the economic, political, cooperative, educational and cultural field.

THE court having upheld the injunction of District 12, Illinois, thus preventing John L. Lewis from ousting the district officers, it is reported that the Illinois miners will no longer accept Lewis' leadership. The breach between the district officials and the national organization has reached the stage for which no healing solution can be found.

With the only large solvent miners' bituminous district seemingly about to break definitely with the present national leadership, and with a tough battle facing the United Mine Workers in the anthracite fields when the agreement there presently expires, the indications multiply that the Lewis regime may be at an end.

When John L. Lewis assumed the presidency of the United Mine Workers in 1919 the bituminous membership stood at over 350,000. It now consists of but 98,040 members. Even if the difficulties facing the coal industry are taken into account and due weight is given to the reduction in the number of miners in the post-war deflation, critics of the Lewis regime appear justified in the contention that the responsibility for this appalling drop in membership is a grave indictment of the Lewis leadership.

As against this general decline of the miners' union, once known as "the backbone of the American Labor Movement," is the record of the Illinois District, No. 12: In the face of the national loss of members it was able to hold its own forces in good shape, keep the district closed-shop with a membership of 53,000, or 54 per cent of the U. M. W. total, and maintain fairly satisfactory agreements with the operators. Under such conditions the Illinois District, in any reorganization of the miners' union as a whole which must come soon, is in a natural position to assume the leadership.

While many hold that the record of the administration of the Illinois district is none too good, it does possess the prestige which comes from having maintained an organization in these trying times for over 50,000 miners. It is certain, however, that no attempt at rebuilding a union for the soft coal miners has even the faintest hope for success, unless those in charge of such an effort have the enthusiastic confidence of the rank and file of these miners. There are men whose integrity and courage the rank and file have learned to trust, in many instances men whom Lewis drove out of the United Mine Workers because they would not be his pliant tools. There are militant spirits like John Brophy, former President of District No. 2, Powers Hapgood and Alex Howat, the latter back as President of the Kansas District which he has reknit in splendid fashion. With such leadership and a well knit and organized district like Illinois behind it from the start,

the coal miners of the country could look with hope for the return of that power and control of the industry which was built up at such sacrifice and destroyed so shamefully.

The first job of a revived miners' organization would be to tackle immediately the non-union districts in the South, such as Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia. Until these are organized there can be no hope for improvement in the lot of the miners in general nor in the permanent security of any organization that may be rebuilt.

These observations suggest how complex is the problem before the miners and how huge the task of building an effective, progressive miners' union. At the moment it seems to be very much up to the Illinois District.

PROGRESSIVES have frequently suggested that Matthew Woll and other figures which dominate the A. F. of L. at present have far less respect for Samuel Gompers than they pretend, and are departing from his policies and spirit at certain points, especially where "the grand old man" showed leanings toward labor militancy, internationalism, lower tariff views, and so on. Matthew Woll comes right out with it now in an article in the January number of *CURRENT HISTORY*, criticizing the International Labor Office of the League of Nations. After calling attention to the fact that Gompers presided over the commission which brought the I. L. O. into existence, he says, "We shall never cease to marvel at the fact that Gompers . . . should have played so great a part in and become so partisan to an organization whose major achievements cannot be recorded except through legislation of the social reform type." Let the spirit of Gompers consider itself slapped on the wrist.

In a nutshell the criticism of the International Labor Office made by Mr. Matthew Woll in *CURRENT HISTORY* comes to this:

- (1) The I. L. O. does not pitch out on their noses the delegates from the Fascist countries.
- (2) Its "conventions," even when they are actually enforced by the respective countries, attain social justice only by legislative governmental powers.

One can be sure that the trades union representatives in the I. L. O. share Mr. Woll's distaste for Mussolini's "free" unions. If there had been Labor Governments in more countries and a stronger International Federation of Trade Unions the Fascist delegates would have been rejected. What is the A. F. of L. doing to help in that respect?

Then certainly, also, no one thinks that State action for the workers in any country can replace action by the workers. But cannot the workers conquer and control the State powers and in collective self-help use them for the workers' good?

Mr. Woll shows his hand when he advises British Labor to adopt a tariff protection policy instead of trying to overcome the evils of competition of low-paid labor by raising the standards of workers in backward countries. With all his scorn for "State Socialist policies," he is willing to join with employers to get action by the State in the form of higher tariffs which bleed the majority of the workers by way of high prices for the uncertain benefit of the few. Having thus assured big business of the State the legislation it desires, he would have Labor stick to a "philosophy of freedom" which is as dead as the dodo in this era of super mergers.

This is the man whom some of our Socialists, we understand, would take to their bosom opining that he is as good a Socialist as anybody.

THE announcement of the creation by President Hoover of a Commission for the Study of Social Trends calls attention to what is already a serious menace. In the past

Big Business Tightens Grip On Government

During the critical period of the middle eighties, for example, which were so admirably dramatized by the Knights of Labor, a government Commission was appointed to look over the field. Similarly, when the serious industrial depression of 1893 shook the country out of its smug complacency another industrial Commission was appointed to study affairs. And when in 1913 depression again hit the country, culminating in the famous Ludlow Massacre during the coal strike in Colorado, the United States Commission on Industrial Relations was appointed, later better known as the Walsh Commission.

The virtue of these commissions was that they had politically minded persons on them who were interested in human values and human relations. Thus these Commissions held hearings throughout the country, giving leaders of all important social points of view an opportunity to present their various analyses of the existing situation and their remedies. These hearings were always front page copy and through such publicity the public at large was permitted access to important national problems. Interest in their solution was general. Finally the proceedings, when printed, offered further means for maintaining interest among the populace on vital questions. The recommendations of these commissions were then debated in Congress and other public forums. In short, the investigations and findings of government commissions were public property.

Now, however, with the advent of "efficiency" and technology big business regards itself competent enough to handle such investigations. Mr. Hoover circumvents all previous modes of procedure which turned the limelight on the nation's sore spots, by appointing business men, without any responsibility to any one but themselves, to investigate present-day ills. These high-powered executives then hire so-called impartial technicians who issue colorless and highly technical reports which no layman can find the courage to read. The business men, meanwhile, assure the public that everything is nice and rosy. With these reports finally ready for publication the Commission proceeds to write a covering statement which disregards even what its own "experts" disclose, misrepresenting the whole situation and deluding the people into thinking that only agitators can find anything actually wrong.

Lest any one think this description of present day commissions exaggerated we point to the Report on Recent Economic Changes as bearing out our charge. Notwithstanding its sponsorship by some of our leading economists it is a direct whitewash of the present planless system by toning down outstanding facts. And when these economists permitted their report to be covered by a statement of the Commission they connived in perpetrating on the public one of the worst pieces of misrepresentation. In this manner the economists have become allies of Big Business.

We consider this tendency of such grave import as to merit further discussion and a statement on another page of this issue deals in greater detail with the question. Suffice it here to emphasize that through such procedure American democracy is getting another vicious jolt. The old fashioned investigations, at which all points of view were

represented, may not have been as "efficient" as these Hoover Commissions. But at least they were not so one-sided and they gave the public the facts in understandable form upon which could be based definite opinion for action.

AN examination of the unfavorable factors making for present day industrial depression discloses an overproduction in the automobile, radio and airplane industries

The New Technology And Old Ailments

—all of them being classified among the new industries. This overproduction contributes greatly to the three million officially estimated as the number of unemployed in this country. The automobile industry especially and those dependent on it such as steel, glass, and leather, are the hardest hit. Auto production this year, it is estimated, will be 20 per cent less than last, with a corresponding reduction of production in associated industries. This is also typical of the radio and airplane industries—all new industries which add their quota to the army of unemployed.

The total situation as it stands is a factual repudiation of latter day economic doctrine of the capitalist-Pollyanna school. According to this doctrine there was no need of worrying about workers being displaced by mergers, machines and age limits in old industries—the new industries would take care of them. And how! Now look at them! The fact of the matter is that machines and mergers in the new industries created such a superfluity of commodities as to make the reverse of the Pollyanna economics true. The new industries failed to absorb the surplus workers just as signally as did the old.

Many workers have refrained from thinking through their problems seriously because of the assurance of the hopeful economists. They have not joined a labor union or taken part in labor politics because they felt that industry, itself, would take care of them. Possibly now, that the actual facts are revealed and there are no new industries to look forward to, they will change their minds. The sooner they will the quicker can steps be taken towards real remedies for their present plight.

IF the reported statement by President William Green during his speech at Richmond, Va., that the murder of the six strikers at Marion occurred when the A. F. of L. was not yet in charge of the Southern organization campaign, is correct, and if that is the line of procedure the A. F. of L. is to follow in the future in the South, then we can rest assured that the present organization venture is doubtful of success.

Standing before the six coffins in which lay the cold bodies of the murdered Marion strikers, Francis J. Gorman, Vice-President of the U. T. W., said:

"I bring today the individual and organized sympathy of the United Textile Workers of America. . . . President Green of the American Federation of Labor has protested in no uncertain language against this shameful affair. . . . These men died that the Union might live."

By his words, if rightly reported, President Green, instead of placing the blame for the murders on those who were really responsible, the Baldwin interests and the hired thugs, puts the onus of this enormous crime on the United Textile Workers of America and on the A. F. of L. itself.

But what of the Southern workers? How will they accept this definite implication: that the A. F. of L. will attempt to get out from under at the first sign of trouble in the future?

Will they be prone to bare their breasts and stand up for the good fight with this knowledge before them? Hardly.

Ol' Man River

By OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN, 2nd

*Niggers all work on de Mississippi,
Niggers all work while de white folks play,
Pulling dose boats from de dawn to sunset,
Gettin' no rest till de judgment day.*

*Don't look up an' don't look down,
You don't dast make de white boss frown;
Bend your knees an' bow yo' head,
An' pull dat rope until yo're dead.*

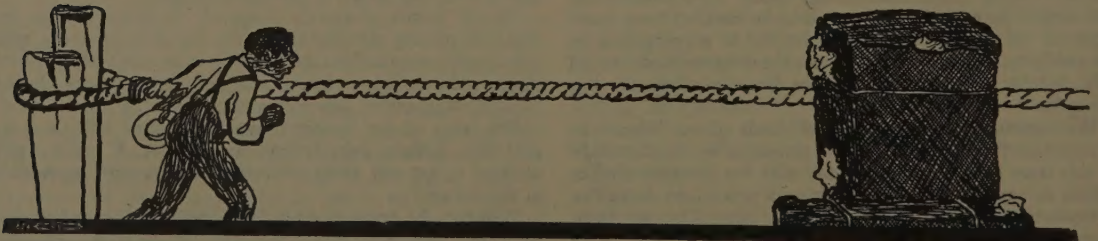
*Let me go 'way from de Mississippi,
Let me go 'way from de white man boss,
Show me dat stream called de river Jordan,
Dat's de ol' stream dat I long to cross.*

*Ol' man river, dat ol' man river,
He must know sumpin', but don't say nothin',
He just keeps rollin', he keeps on rollin' along.*

*He don't plant 'taters, he don't plant cotton,
An' dem dat plants 'em is soon forgotten;
But ol' man river he jes' keeps rollin' along.*

*You an me, we sweat and strain,
Body all achin' an' 'racked wid pain.
"Tote dat barge! Lift dat bale,"
Git a little drunk an' you'll land in jail.*

*Ah gits weary and sick of tryin',
Ahm tired of livin' an' feared of dyin',
But ol' man river he jes' keeps rollin' along.*



The Negro Worker

A Problem of Vital Concern to the Entire Labor Movement

By ABRAM L. HARRIS

The known Negro union membership is about 56,000. The total number of Negro workers employed in transportation, extraction of minerals and manufacturing is around 1,300,000. So Negro workers are only about 4.3 per cent organized. About twenty-one per cent (20.8%) of all American wage earners, excluding agricultural workers, are trade union members. Therefore the Negro is only about a third as well organized as all workers. The problem doesn't stop there, however. There are 348,000 Negro workers employed in iron and steel, meat packing, textiles, lumber and furniture, and tobacco—industries of unskilled and semi-skilled workers which are hardly touched by unionization. The organization of the Negro, therefore, involves the greater problem of organizing the unskilled and semi-skilled in the basic industries which lies at the root of militant unionism.

TO accomplish the purposes of progressive labor the first need is to create a greater degree of solidarity than now exists among the workers. The two great obstacles to such labor solidarity are the psychology of craft unionism and the psychology of race prejudice. White workers, both organized and unorganized, have sought time and again to prohibit the employment of Negro workers, or to limit it to menial occupations or to those jobs that offered organized white workers little direct competition. They have tried to reduce Negro labor to a class of non-competitors. The employers, although not free from race antipathy themselves, have not hesitated to exploit it as a means of carrying out a policy of "divide and rule."

Thus, during the early period of capitalistic development in steel, packing, coal and shipping, the employers used Negro labor only spasmodically, in case of a strike, or in a period of industrial expansion, when the supply of foreign labor was insufficient to meet the emergency, or because foreign labor had learned the necessity of unionization. Between 1880 and 1915 southern Negro labor was something of an industrial reserve for many basic industries. This reserve was not chiefly agricultural, as is often thought. Its background was agricultural, but in the eighties Negroes began to move gradually from the rural sections to the cities of the South, thence to northern industrial centers as occasion warranted.

The Negro Enters Industry

In 1915 huge waves of this southern Negro labor poured into the northern industries when large numbers of our recent immigrants returned to their former homes to answer the call

to arms. When the United States entered the war more of this labor drifted north in response to the demand created by industrial expansion. And after the war it continued to come because of the cessation of foreign immigration, and because employers, traditionally hostile to the employment of Negroes, awoke to their value in breaking strikes or in defeating the purpose of unionism. And Negro workers undisciplined in collective bargaining, ignorant of trade union traditions, distrustful of white workers, especially when organized, and led by opportunist leaders nurtured upon philanthropy and the doles of the rich, not only accepted struck jobs with impunity, but accepted the employer's terms as to wages and working conditions, chief of which was non-membership in trade unions, as a long denied opportunity for relief from economic slavery.

These changes of Negro labor from South to North, from domestic and small industrial employment to capitalistic industry, occasioned much bitterness between Negro and white workers, as was exhibited in the Chicago and East St. Louis race riots. But one wonders why astute trade union leaders had not foreseen in the sporadic employment of Negro strike-breakers in the early industrial development, the uses to which they might be put at some later time. For example, the once militant but now almost shattered United Mine Workers saw that their ability to control the northern coal fields was dependent upon the degree to which organization was effected among both white and black miners in the southern fields. Although the union failed to accomplish its aim, it recognized the necessity of organizing both white and black miners inasmuch as Negro mine

labor was not only employed in West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee but had a long history dating back to the 80's in the breaking of strikes in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Ohio. Had similar strategy been employed by other unions, it is not at all unlikely that at least the seeds of working class solidarity would have been sown among Negro and white masses before the exodus to the North.

A Policy of Exclusion

The fact that Negro labor was chiefly unskilled meant that it had no place in a Labor Movement that was based upon skilled craftsmanship, despite the fact that it could be used, thanks to the increasing mechanization of heavy industries, to defeat the purposes of unionism. This applies with almost equal force to the organization of the unskilled white workers. Such unions as the machinists, the boiler-makers, the blacksmiths, the molders, the plumbers, the sheet metal workers, and the tile workers were never too friendly to their less skilled brother, the white helper. As a matter of fact, these unions for a long time opposed the admission of the white helper and sought to confirm his status in order to preserve their monopoly of the job.

Some of these unions who were most bitter to the white helper were likewise hostile to the Negro. They sought to forestall Negro competition by excluding Negro mechanics from the union. So clauses were written to that effect in the union's constitution or ritual. And many unions like the carpenters, the bricklayers, the confectionery workers, and the hotel workers, that had no constitutional barriers against Negro membership and that felt keen competition from the employment of Negroes, were forced

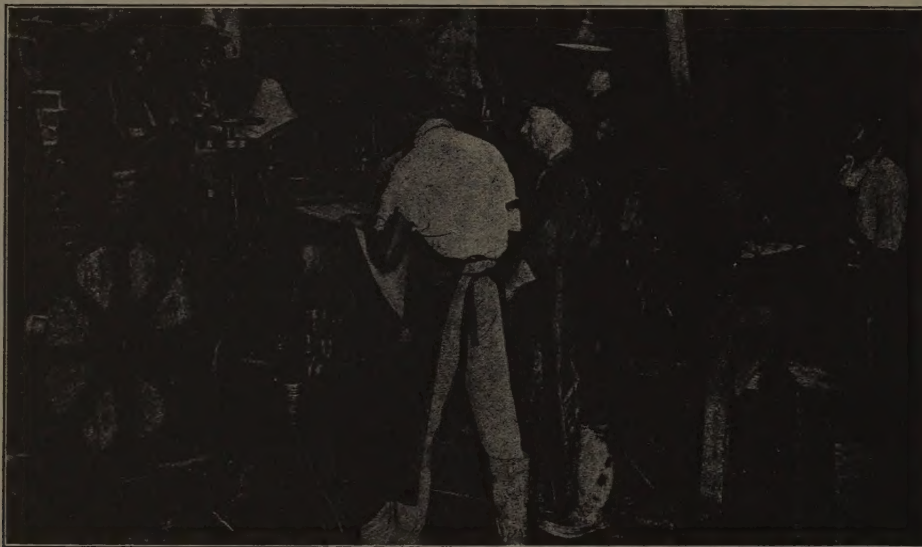
to organize them into segregated locals; or leave them out of the union as the leader of the molders did in Nashville, Tennessee, because the white molders objected to the organization of the Negro and because the Negroes were afraid of being dis-

Brotherhood of Railway Conductors, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.

Ten of the above unions are affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, which has appealed to them

a victory, which firmly established the Federation's claim of organizing all workers regardless of race. At one time the Executive Council was decidedly opposed to the affiliation of unions that openly debarred Negro workers. This attitude delayed the ad-

IN INDUSTRY TO STAY



Courtesy of "Opportunity"
Black and white men work together in the shop, why not in the same union?

charged once they had joined the union.

Today there are no less than 26 unions whose constitutions or rituals limit membership to white men. They are the Brotherhood of Railway Car-men, the Switchmen of North America, the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, the Order of Sleeping Car Conductors, the Order of Railway Telegraphers, The National Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots of North America, the Railway Mail Association, the Wire Weavers Protective Association, the Commercial Telegraphers, the Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers Union, the International Association of Machinists, the Brotherhood of Dining Car Conductors, the Order of Railway Expressmen, the American Federation of Express Workers, the American Federation of Railroad Workers, the Brotherhood of Railroad Station Employees and Clerks, the Train Despatchers, the Railroad Yard Masters of America, the Neptune Association, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the

to lower the barriers to Negro admission. Those unions that have responded were forced to do so because of increasing Negro competition. But their response has usually taken the form of separate organization characterized by one or all of the following discrimination.

Auxiliary and Federal Unions No Remedy

Negroes are to be organized into auxiliary locals but only where their employment has become traditional. The auxiliary locals of Negro members are to be subordinate to the nearest white local. Negro members may not transfer to white locals; they are not eligible for office; they may not be promoted to skilled work; or they are to be represented in conventions or conferences only by white members. This is the kind of response the Car-men and the Blacksmiths made to the appeals of the Federation. The Boilermakers have not as yet decided how they will respond. But in reverence to the sacred doctrine of trade autonomy, the Federation officials accepted these half-measures as something of

mission of the Machinists. And it has been said that it was also a factor in the Federation's refusal to accept one of the railroad brotherhoods. But the Machinists were admitted without relinquishing the right to debar Negroes of the craft.

The Federation has sought to get around the racial discrimination of its affiliated bodies by empowering the Executive Council to charter directly local and federal unions of Negro workers who are debarred from the union of their craft, or who are unskilled, and therefore, unorganizable into craft unions. This gesture has not materially improved Negro organization or increased Negro trade union affiliation.

In the first place the responsibility for the members of a Negro local obtaining the prevailing wage is likely to fall upon the very union that denies them admission; and the Federation, which, as has been claimed, is the "international" of such Negro locals, surely cannot force a local of a national or international union to handle wage grievances of one of its directly chartered Negro locals. In the second

place, these locals of Negro workers usually become mere dues paying entities that are separated from the main currents of the trade union world. In the third place, the leaders of the Federation have been too well satisfied with meager results vigorously to push organization among Negroes. And in the fourth place, when persons inside and outside of the Federation have called attention to the weakness of its Negro organizational policy, it has merely passed resolutions, or congratulated itself that it could find no fault with its past methods and results. Yet of the hundreds of Negro locals and federal unions organized by the Federation between 1917 and 1924, there are not more than 22 at present.

Instead of merely passing resolutions expressing a desire to see more Negroes in the labor movement, as it did at its recent and previous conventions, the Federation should inquire into the reasons for its past ineffectiveness among the unorganized white and black workers. It should seek to establish some definite machinery for bringing about greater cooperation among Negroes and whites in the labor movement. A part of such machinery should certainly have been incorporated in its program of workers education long ago. A proposal of

this kind emanated from one of the conventions of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People a few years back, but failed to provoke any response from A. F. of L. leaders. To effect an understanding between white and black labor is, of course, no simple task. What the leadership of organized labor needs to be censured for is not its failure to effect greater harmony but its refusal to make some attempt toward a realistic understanding of the problem and the issues involved. If progressives in their turn are to make headway in bringing Negro and white workers into closer alignment for economic and political action they must first understand the difficulties and prepare to remove them. This is what conventional trade unionism has failed to do.

The known Negro trade union membership was about 45,000 in 1926. If the membership of the independent Negro unions, chiefly paper unions, is included, the total membership was about 56,000. According to the census for 1920 there were almost 1,300,000 Negroes employed in transportation, extraction of minerals and manufacturing. So Negro workers, including those above ten years of age, were about 4.3 per cent organized. But only 20.8 per cent of all American wage

earners, excluding agricultural workers, are trade union members. The Negro, therefore, is about a third as well organized as all workers. When skill is made a requirement for trade union affiliation, less than 16.6 per cent of the 825,000 Negroes employed in manufacturing industries are available for affiliation, since 68 per cent of them were unskilled and 15.5 per cent semi-skilled.

A Problem of the Unskilled Workers

Moreover those industries in which trade unionism is weakest, having capitulated to the offensive of welfare capitalism, or where craft unionism can make little headway because of integration and specialization, have the greatest number of Negro workers. For example, in iron and steel there were 106,000 unskilled and 24,000 semi-skilled Negroes in 1920; in the food industries, mainly packing, there were 28,000 unskilled and 16,000 semi-skilled; in textiles, there were 18,000 unskilled and 8,000 semi-skilled; in lumber and furniture, 107,000 unskilled; and in tobacco 20,000 semi-skilled and 21,000 unskilled Negroes. A Labor Movement which avoids the unpleasant job of going into these industries because the workers have manifested no desire for



Courtesy of "Opportunity"

Women are an important factor in the organization of Negro workers as is evident by the above photo.

organization or because organization will take time and money, is both timid and reactionary, and will become the victim of its own inertia. It is the task of progressives to precipitate action among workers in these industries. And effective action cannot ignore the position of Negro labor if for no other reason than that organized white labor is fully protected only when Negro and white workers are equally organized. That there are obstacles in the way of unity between white and black labor, progressives need not deny. But they should deny that these obstacles are insuperable.

This denial should not take the form of the radical's stock in trade generalization about the solidarity of economic interest between white and black workers. It should be embodied in intelligent appraisals of situations where Negroes and whites are being brought or have been brought into industrial relationship. In such situations it would devolve upon progressives to show white and black workers how race prejudice defeats their mutual welfare. In this connection special attention may be made of the situation in the South. It is the opinion of certain white workers there that "the two races should have separate, distinct organizations connected by central bodies composed of representatives of both races." It has been remarked that this "is an advance over the short-sighted, opportunistic policy which is still in vogue in most white labor circles," namely that of excluding Negro workers from unions altogether or at any rate being indifferent to the needs of this group.

Bi-Racial Movement Dangerous

It will have to be borne in mind that there are dangers connected with anything which may lead to the development of a bi-racial movement. White employers are not actuated by racial interests. They will not hesitate to use white labor versus black, and vice versa. Certainly in the long run white and black labor cannot rise "to the highest position in the economic order apart from each other." Nevertheless, vague, fine-sounding idealistic phrases do not solve the problem. We emphasize that intelligent appraisals of concrete situations where Negroes and whites are being brought into industrial relationship are essential.

But this is not all. The sympathy of groups of Negro workers who can lead the masses of their fellows must be won. To do this progressives will

have to begin from the bottom and build up. They must carry to the Negro workers some understanding of modern industrialism and the position of the workers under it, remembering that the Negro is of recent industrial experience. And, finally, progressives must realize that Negro economic and political leadership is opportunistic and middle class. On the political side it teaches the masses that their national interest is best protected by the Republican party; and that in local political matters they should follow the policy of "rewarding their friends and punishing their enemies." Being economically weak the Negro, like all such classes, has looked to legislation for the removal of the social and economic disadvantages from which he suffers. A Labor Party which would connect the Negro's special racial demands with its broader economic and social reforms can in time wean large sections of the Negro workers from the major parties.

On the economic side, the Negro masses have been taught that their welfare is best promoted by adopting a conciliatory attitude to those who control industrial and economic opportunity, through subservience to the wealthy, and through the establishment of a sort of self-sufficient Negro petit capitalism. Here the progressives must demonstrate to the Negro masses that their problem, like that of the white masses, is inevitably that of work and wages. For even if the Negro leaders who look upon the creation of Negro financial and business enterprise as the economic salvation of the Negro masses, are successful in realizing their ideal, the institutions that they hope to establish are to be run on the basis of economic individualism and private profit, despite the tendency of these leaders to confuse "racial cooperation in business" with genuine consumers cooperation. But the success of a Negro petit capitalism will give economic reality mere-

ly to our contemporary Negro middle class which is temperamentally detached from the realities of working class life. But however successful Negro business enterprises may be, and whether it proceeds on a quasi-self-sufficient racial basis or takes its chances for survival in the general competitive arena, it must in the nature of things remain a diminutive force in modern industrialism, which is to say, that its heralded power for meeting the problem of Negro unemployment will be of small importance. The great masses of Negro workers will continue to find their employment with those who now control finance and industry. And the few Negroes who will obtain work at the hands of the black capitalists of tomorrow will not thereby cease to be wage earners. Their problem will merely be shifted from the center of modern economic life where white capitalists dominate to the margin where small Negro enterprisers earn the wages of management.

The Immediate Task

Thus progressives must carry to the Negro masses some realization of the causes of unemployment, low wages, and the need for labor unionism and cooperation, in general; and of the reasons that explain the special severity of industrial disadvantage upon them as a racial group, in particular. None of these lessons will take root if they are presented spasmodically and, above all, if the white workers are unwilling to accept Negroes into working class fellowship. As great as these difficulties may seem, a policy of letting well enough alone or one of delay will never overcome them.

Progressives therefore will do well to begin to grapple with them now. In meeting this problem they must carry out a militant labor program, namely the organization of these workers who have been neglected by traditional trade unionism; the reestablishment of unionism in those industries where it has petered out or failed to establish control because of lethargic and self-satisfied leadership which refuses to recognize the inadequacy of craft unionism in such highly integrated and mechanized industries as packing, steel, rubber and automobiles; the stimulation of an offensive against the open shop, company union, employee welfare capitalism of the trustified industries; and weaning Labor of subservience to the two major political parties in order to create independent working-class political action.

SWEATSHOP MUST GO

Every progressive laborite will wish the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union well in the coming New York dress strike. Of the 2,500 shops in this city 1,900 are sweatshops, according to President Benjamin Schlesinger. The enthusiasm of the workers for the fight against the inhuman conditions now prevailing is equal to that of the cloakmakers just before their recent successful strike. Victory, therefore, is assured.

Organization of Negro Labor

A Challenge to the A. F. of L.

By ELMER ANDERSON CARTER

IT was the textile industries of the South, for the most part manned by native born white Americans, which threw down the gauge of battle and precipitated the most widely heralded and aggressive attempt to organize southern workers in the history of the American Labor Movement. Southern capitalists, making a belated bid for industrial power, have always looked askance at any attempt to organize workers. And the new industrial South had its birth partly in the cheap docile labor supply which was used as bait to lure manufacturing plants from northern communities where the demands of organized labor were proving vexatious.

In the South organized labor has always been weak. Black labor as slave labor had impoverished and pauperized free white labor, and the traditional hostility between black and white workers which slavery fostered has not diminished except in rare instances. White workers in their allegiance to a caste superiority based on color and race have played into the hands of cheap political demagogues

and of employers who have used the unspoken threat of black replacement to whip and to hold white workers in line. The capitalists of the South for the most part have been class conscious, but only partially race conscious in so far as workers are concerned, but the white workers of the South have been race conscious and only partially class conscious. As a result organized labor in the South has been timid and unaggressive, fearing black labor except in those occupations where a preponderance of black workers has made an alliance inevitable, or in those occupations where either tradition or a necessarily long apprenticeship served to keep black workers out.

Facing Conditions

These are the conditions which the American Federation of Labor faces in its great drive to unionize the South. They are conditions which "cannot be evaded, cannot be ignored, and must be faced." For any attempt to organize white workers without simultaneously organizing black workers must

inevitably end in failure. If the American Federation of Labor is to succeed in the South, it must do so on the basis of an alliance between black and white workers. And this alliance cannot be achieved unless the American Federation of Labor is able to evolve a technique of labor cooperation which will assure to black workers the recognition and support of organized white labor.

* * *

Amid the giant furnaces and innumerable smokestacks of Birmingham, Alabama, the American Federation of Labor has established its headquarters. From this center of the great industrial South the strategists of the Labor Movement are even now directing their campaign. If they have eyes they will not need to go out of the state of Alabama in order to see the utter impossibility of organizing labor on the basis of racial superiority. For, according to the 1920 census, under the general heading, Extraction of Metals, of the 26,204 males over 10 years of age engaged in coal mining 14,097 were Negroes, over 53

SHALL THEY WORK WITH OR AGAINST WHITE LABOR?



Here we see more colored workers. Will the A. F. of L. rise to the opportunity and take steps toward their equal affiliation with white workers?

Courtesy of "Opportunity"

per cent of the total number of coal mine operatives in the state. In the iron mines, out of a total of 6,102 operatives, 4,843 are Negroes, over 79 per cent of the total number engaged in iron mining. Under the manufacturing and mechanical industries in the same volume of the 1920 census, out of a total of 835 furnacemen and smeltermen, 666 are Negroes, almost 80 per cent. In the semi-skilled crafts in blast furnaces and steel rolling mills, including tin plate mills, out of a total of 2,307, 1,022 are Negroes, over 44 per cent. Among the 1,625 semi-skilled operatives in the saw and planing mills, including box factories, are 594 Negroes, or 36 per cent. In the suit, cloak and overall factories there are 444 Negroes out of a total of 508 semi-skilled operatives, over 87 per cent. And in the blast furnaces and steel rolling mills, out of a total of 10,680 unskilled laborers, 8,959 are Negroes, a little over 83 per cent. Taking the totals for the state in manufacturing and mechanical industry, out of 135,608 skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers 56,384 are Negroes, or 41 per cent.

Although these figures may vary more or less in the South as a whole, they are sufficient to indicate the numerical strength of black workers in that section of the country. They should be impressive enough to convince the American Federation of Labor that any plan for unionization of the South which attempts to ignore the black worker, or which attempts by subtle means to maintain a relationship based on caste, is foredoomed.

In the southern drive does the American Federation of Labor contemplate the organization of Negro workers? If so, what program has been outlined for that purpose? What methods are to be pursued in order to bring white workers and black workers to a common understanding of their common problems? How does the American Federation of Labor plan to bridge the gap which social custom and tradition have cut between the workers of the two races? These questions are pertinent—aye, are pressing for an answer. Speaking editorially in the January, 1930 issue of the *AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST*, Mr. William Green says: "Trade Union membership is open to all Negroes. The majority of trade unions accept Negroes as members, but when regulations are interposed the rules of the American Federation of Labor provide that Negro workers may apply for charters direct from the American Federation of Labor. . . . Through

union organization the Negro can raise his standards and the American Federation stands ready to help."

A. F. of L. Complacency

If this is the answer which the American Federation of Labor makes to the questions above, and it is similar in content to other statements which from time to time have emanated from high officials of the Federation, then the American Federation of Labor is not prepared to meet the challenge of black workers, not prepared in the South or in the nation. The attitude expressed in this statement is one of complacent satisfaction. It places the responsibility for the organization of Negroes on the Negro himself, while it ignores, apparently, the history of the Negro in the Labor Movement. That history is a history of resolutions which have been as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, of the creation of Federal and local unions which are dying from inanition, and of a constant struggle on the part of black workers not only to secure a place in industry but to hold that place sometimes against the hostility and aggressions of organized white labor.

If one will take the time to read the proceedings of the various conventions of the American Federation of Labor, he cannot help but be profoundly impressed by the constant and heroic effort which black workers through their accredited delegates have made to secure the support of organized labor from within. Ten years ago at the convention of the American Federation of Labor at Montreal, Quebec, Negro delegates, eager to extend the blessings of trade unionism among their fellows, and conscious of the hostile attitude which they, even as union men, encountered among their white brothers, presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The American Federation of Labor has taken a firm position on the claims of Negro labor to fair and impartial sharing of the benefits of organized labor; and

WHEREAS, Despite this attitude of the American Federation of Labor, encouraging results have not followed; and millions of Negro workingmen continue ignorant of the benefits of collective bargaining, thus militating against the successful operation of the Federation in its fight for a square deal for labor; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Federation of Labor enter upon a campaign of education among both white and

colored working men to convince them of the necessity of bringing into the ranks of labor all men who work, regardless of race, creed or color; and be it further

RESOLVED, That, with this end in view, there be called into periodical conference with the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor white and colored leaders who can suitably represent and express the point of view of Negro workingmen, and can convey to Negro workingmen the good will and sympathy felt by the American Federation of Labor towards them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That there be employed in headquarters at Washington a competent Negro agent, taken from the ranks of labor, who will express the hopes and yearnings of Negro workingmen to the American Federation of Labor, and in turn be the mouthpiece of the Federation for such messages and information as the Federation may from time to time wish to convey to the Negro workers throughout the country; said agent to be the executive secretary and official representative in the interim of meetings of said special committee on Negro workers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Convention endorse the appointment of Negro organizers in all states and for all crafts in which Negroes are or may be employed, whose duty will be to build up Negro membership.

Resolutions—That's All

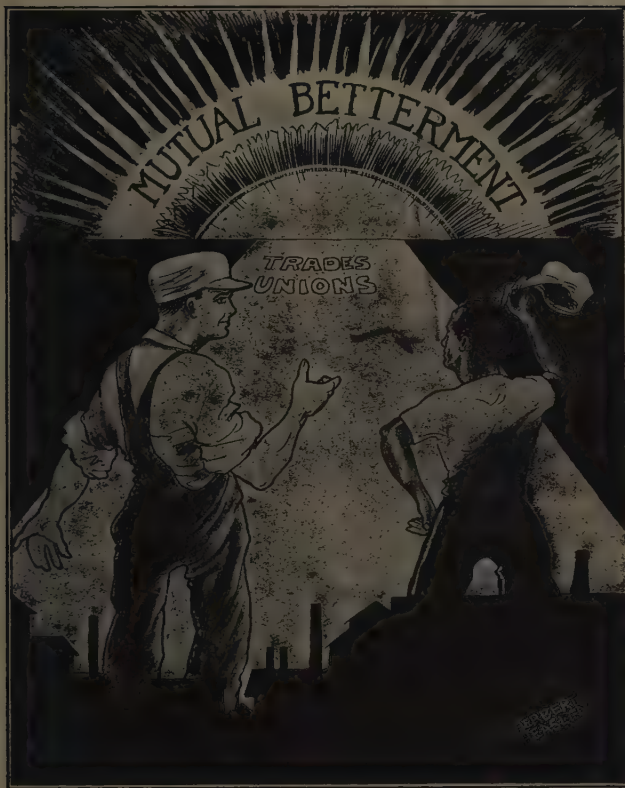
This resolution was not a perfect one. But it pointed the way in that it sought to create the machinery which would bring both black and white workers to an understanding. The action of the Committee of Organization to which this resolution was referred, is indicative of the attitude which has pervaded the American Federation of Labor whenever it deals with the Negro. Here is the emasculated resolution which the committee reported and which was passed:

WHEREAS, The A. F. of L. has taken a firm position on the claims of Negro labor to fair and impartial sharing of the benefits of organized labor; and

WHEREAS, Despite this attitude of the A. F. of L. encouraging results have not followed, and millions of Negro workingmen continue ignorant of the benefits of collective bargaining, thus militating against the successful operation of the Federation in its fight for a square deal for labor; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Negro organizers be appointed where necessary to organize

THE GOAL



Drawn for Labor Age by Herbert Hensley.

Progressive labor invites the Negro worker to join in the march toward industrial emancipation.

Negro workers under the banner of the A. F. of L.

Your committee concurs in the resolution as amended and refers it to the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to comply with, if the funds of the Federation will permit.

Evidently it was and is the conception of the A. F. of L. only to attempt to organize the Negro workers where necessary, and this is determined by the threat of Negro workers as potential strike breakers, or where Negro competition menaces the occupational security of white workers. It is a policy essentially weak, and as a result the growth of Negro adherents to the American Federation of Labor since 1920 has been steadily diminishing. And although it has been explained by Mr. Green that the decrease in Federal locals might be accounted for in part by the fact that some of them have become internationals, this will not account for the drop in Negro locals from 141 in No-

vember, 1921, to 21 in November, 1929,* since none of the Negro locals has become nationals or internationals, nor can they since it has been repeatedly stated by officers of the A. F. of L. that it is not the policy of the A. F. of L. to grant international charters along racial lines.

In 1929 Mr. A. Phillip Randolph, President of Sleeping Car Porters' Union No. 18,068 of New York City, presented another resolution which was passed by the A. F. of L. in convention assembled at Montreal as follows:

WHEREAS, There is wide-spread misunderstanding among Negro workers, who are some of the most severely exploited wage-earners in America, chiefly because of the lack of organization, as

*From the Negro and Trade Unions, by Ira De A. Reid, Director of the Department of Research, National Urban League.

to the aims and policies of the American Federation of Labor; and

WHEREAS, The Negro workers in numerous industrial struggles, have been used by certain business interests as strike-breakers for the purpose of breaking down trade union standards of wages, hours and working conditions and the principle of collective bargaining;

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that the 49th Annual Convention of the A. F. of L. does herewith go on record as favoring the extension of an educational and organization program as outlined by President William Green in his recent speeches to the Sleeping Car Porters' in New York and Chicago, with a view to organizing them into the trades and callings as represented by the American Federation of Labor.

There has been no lack of resolutions on the part of the A. F. of L. as to the organization of Negro workers. If resolutions could have unionized Negro workers, there would not be a non-union black in the entire country. But the American Federation has never gotten really much further than the resolution stage and has been content "to resolve" and call it a day.

Whatever may be the plan of education and organization above mentioned, workers education in the aims of trade unionism to be effective must include both blacks and whites. No matter how thoroughly the doctrines and ideals of trade unionism are inculcated into the minds of Negroes, they will never be translated into organized effort so long as racial antipathy moves the black workers and racial snobbery permeates the whites.

In the past this education has not been wholly lacking. But it has been purchased at a price that is far too dear. Negroes struggling for existence and excluded from the ranks of organized labor have fought their way into industry in the role of strike breakers. They have been used by employers to beat down white labor. And then they in turn have been forced to accept wages and hours of work far below the minimum standards.

Negro Strikers

There is nothing in the Negroes' racial characteristics which predisposes them to be scabs. Negro union men have struck with white union men on more than one occasion. Black freight handlers on the Illinois Central Railroad loyally went on strike with the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks which denied them membership because of race. Negro hod carriers, according to John P. Frey, Secretary of the Metal Trades Department (Continued on page 29)

The Dixie Crusade

By WILLIAM ROSS

AT last the campaign to organize the South was to start. Much space was reserved at Hotel Charlotte, one of the leading hotels in the South. The conference was to meet in the ballroom of the hotel. No doubt the better people of the town were somewhat impressed with the good taste shown by the Federation. Of course, Marion strikers and such, could hardly appear there. But then, the conference was meant to impress the mill owners and the middle classes.

Of the 229 persons present the majority were Southerners deeply interested in organizing workers of the South. Various Internationals were represented by organizers sent in specially for the campaign. Others had observers on the scene. William Green presided while Edward F. McGrady was sort of sergeant-at-arms.

The assembled men and women were an earnest group impressed by their mission and by the numbers attending the conference. True, many of them were divided. There were politics as usual behind the scenes. There were contentions as to the choice of the headquarters city. Most Southern labor men saw no point in starting the drive from a center claimed by Communists. "Why bother about them?" they inquired innocently. "We will have plenty on our hands as it is."

In a speech of nearly two hours Green expounded the philosophy of the A. F. of L. and its intentions in the Southern campaign. By way of illustration he dealt with the Communist menace to American institutions. The illustrations were very frequent. "Working men and women will stand like our forefathers stood at Valley Forge and Yorktown before they surrender to Communism," Green prophesied. Denying that there is class war in America, Green added that if there is any such thing in America, then it is the "class war between the A. F. of L. and Communists."

President Green stressed the policy of cooperation with employers promising great benefits to industry if the A. F. of L. is recognized.

Dwelling on the spiritual function of the Labor Movement Green said that it would supplement the work of the church in America. By enabling workers to live in decency, the unions would enable workers to enjoy things

spiritual. Incidentally, the higher pay envelope would make larger church collections possible, he said at another point.

Dealing with the business of the conference Green asserted that the A. F. of L. will fight for the workers' right to join unions. He warned that the A. F. of L. will be aggressive and militant in pressing that right.

While condemning the miserable lot of the industrial masses in the South, Green went out of his way to win the sympathy of employers and general public opinion in the section. "We do not come to the manufacturers of the South with mailed fist, but with open hand, appealing to them to give us an opportunity to assist," he pleaded. If they don't deal with us the Communists will take care of them, was Green's threat as the alternative.

Employers Unimpressed

How little impressed Southern employers were by that plea was evident in numerous editorials commenting on President Green's speech. Dave Clark, the half-crazy editor of the TEXTILE BULLETIN retorted that the A. F. of L. is much worse than the Communists and that the Communists behaved decently in Gastonia compared with the tactics in the Marion strike.

Blending his oratory by dwelling on that popular scarecrow, the bogey of Communism, condemning the lot of Southern labor, by appealing to reasonable men and women of all classes, President Green promised to give the campaign "all I have." His parting shot was: "This campaign is no mere gesture but a great crusade."

Although Edward F. McGrady asked four Communist spectators to leave the gallery, as if to emphasize Green's attitude, none of the many speakers who followed wasted time on this sideshow. Even Matthew Woll never mentioned them. He satisfied himself with a highbrow speech in which he dealt with the spiritual ideals of the American Federation of Labor. Its function, he said, was to bring heaven on earth here and now and help to establish the brotherhood of man.

Each of the Southern states had spokesmen who told of degrading conditions of labor and of the thousands ready to answer the call to organize.

More practical men of affairs saw just one difficulty in the way—insufficient funds.

Miners Await Call

Next to textile workers Southern miners suffered most, according to accounts. J. W. Adams, of the Arkansas Federation of Labor, said that at one time 300 miner delegates sat in at the conventions of his state organization. Last time there was one lone delegate.

A representative of the United Mine Workers later said that he was sure the 25,000 miners in Alabama, for instance, could easily be organized. "But," he added, "the day after you call them out you have to put a bag of flour in every miner's home. So poor are they. And we can't tackle that now."

R. T. Bowden, of the Virginia Federation of Labor, warned that there must be flexibility in organization tactics to suit each craft and peculiar circumstances. Other Southern leaders who gave their views and criticisms at the conference held in Washington made only perfunctory remarks on this occasion, feeling that once was enough. They also felt satisfied that at last something was really being started.

They had all been warned by the general press that the time was not ripe. That efforts to organize when the textile industry and other industries in the South suffer from depression, are bound to end in failure and only cause trouble. One renegade labor leader even attacked the leadership of the United Textile Workers on religious grounds. But neither the Southern labor leaders, nor the others, would heed this propaganda.

James L. Hurst, of the Alabama Federation of Labor, delivered a long eulogy of the Governor of that state. He brought the Governor's verbal invitation to set up campaign headquarters there. The Governor promised, according to Hurst, not to use troops in case of strikes. This invitation was accepted by President Green who announced Birmingham as the city.

McMahon's Militant Speech

The one speech of the conference delivered with much warmth came from Thomas F. McMahon, president of the United Textile Workers. Asserting that there will be nothing new

for his union in the Southern fight, He said: "We know what it is to fight. We have gone through it in the North and East. On our banners we will inscribe: 'Marion, N. C., and Elizabethton, Tenn., we shall not forsake you.'"

With some exceptions, the great majority of those present came from skilled occupations whose struggles for recognition in industry were never too strenuous. Theirs was not the struggle of the mill village or the mine pit. One was justified in wondering to what extent they realized the difficulties and risks involved in the proposed venture. To be sure they all know about the Marion massacre and the more distant struggles in the coal fields. In the lobby some spoke of the easy acquittal of the Marion murderers. "Some of us are going to take chances," was the comment.

Perhaps they saw repetition of Marion massacres, Gastonia lynchings and kidnappings, consignments to chain gangs and long terms of imprisonment. But most conferees were unaware of such possibilities. For, were they not undertaking the campaign in a law-abiding spirit, expecting to convince all reasonable men that the Federation wishes to help in easing the pangs of the industrial revolution now taking place in the Southland?

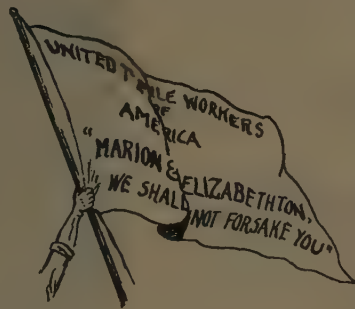
While it was agreed that the campaign was to be general, covering all occupations, the United Textile Workers were to get assistance from every organization. The others would take care of their own needs.

It was promised that the campaign will be conducted on efficient lines. There is to be at the headquarters an index dealing with conditions and organizability of each locality. There is to be a regular publicity man in the person of Gilbert Hyatt. Workers education as practiced by the Workers Education Bureau is also to play a part.

In an effort to meet prejudices of the non-labor elements in the South, it was reiterated again and again that Southerners would do the campaigning. But so far, the great majority of organizers and special workers assigned to the South, are from other parts of the country. Some of them expressed resentment at the harping on the need of Southern agitators and rose to declare to the conference that they are Northern agitators, and proud of it.

President Green's appointment of the committee to lead the campaign is as good as could be expected. He chose an outstanding Southern labor lead-

"LABOR NEVER FORGETS"



Inscription placed on union banner
By President Thomas F. McMahon.

er, W. C. Birthright, Secretary of the Tennessee Federation of Labor, to represent the forces of the South. Francis J. Gorman, Vice-President of the U. T. W., to represent textile workers so vitally interested in the campaign. Paul Smith will represent the A. F. of L. Smith will see to it that everything is "kosher" He is an old-timer who was entrusted by the late Samuel Gompers with the job of purifying radical central labor unions, and similar delicate operations.

Birthright and Gorman who are still in their thirties now have a glorious opportunity to serve the labor movement, and the unorganized millions in the Southland. Will they do and dare, and inspire workers to be brave in the struggle for the better life? Or will they go the road of narrow politicians who fear things new, respond to petty intrigue, and degrade themselves before the powers that be?

Two Able Leaders

Birthright is one of those who originally demanded the organization campaign. Expressing his appreciation of the honor bestowed on him by President Green he said that the campaign was the beginning of a dream he long cherished. He pledged all in him to "eradicate forever the condition of semi-serfdom in the South." His mind runs on independent lines. He has a sense of humor, is not scared of radicals, and is no respecter of persons.

Gorman was little known outside the ranks of the U. T. W. before the tragic events in Marion. Shaken by the outrages there he helped to stir the A. F. of L. into action and has been active in pushing plans for the Southern campaign. He has much personal ability and tact. If he follows his con-

victions rather than intrigues of usual trade union politics, he will become an important leader in the American Labor Movement.

What shall be our attitude in the campaign? Progressives everywhere will wish that efforts to organize workers in this campaign will be crowned with success.

The Communist Bogey

It is unfortunate that the start made in the Charlotte conference leaves a bad taste in the mouth. While the mill owners and their cohorts and allies, the very ones responsible for the outrages in Marion, Gastonia, Elizabethton and elsewhere, are pleaded with so gently, there is the pitiful effort to impress the world with the A. F. of L.'s opposition to Communism. At this late date, no responsible organization and no responsible individual outside the A. F. of L. will stoop down to dwell on this imaginary spectre. Expediency would justify this procedure if it brought results. It only earns the contempt of thinking people. It will not change in the least the opposition on the part of Southern employers, as has been amply proven in Marion.

Most important is the fact that the A. F. of L. is getting into action in the biggest undertaking since 1919. For this decision Marion and those who fought for Marion, are in a large way responsible. As in all great undertakings, once people get into action they land in unexpected places. This may be true of this great crusade, as President Green termed it. Should it go on long enough it may have important influences on the future of the American Labor Movement. It is our task to keep a watchful eye, to test the spirit and the possibilities of the crusade, and give all in us to its promise.

*To follow developments in
the Southern campaign—*

Read
LABOR AGE
every month

Railway Clerks Go To School

By A. J. MUSTE

IT was the real thing in workers education. But the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks did not use the term workers education in reference to the Conference on Organization held at their national headquarters in Cincinnati just before the Christmas holidays. The American people are sentimental about education; indeed, there is undoubtedly more than mere sentiment in their enthusiasm for it. Still, the picture that arises in the back of the heads of most of them when you mention education is probably that of a tall and dogmatic teacher laying down the law to small and humble pupils, and of course, no one who is grown up wants to go back to that sort of thing, which is a rather devastating indictment of our educational system when you come to think of it. Anyhow, the Labor Movement is far from being as enthusiastic at this date about workers education as the American people are about education in general; for various reasons which we need not go into here, some of which probably reflect upon those who have been trying to carry on workers education, and some on the labor movement as at present constituted, and some of which arise out of things as they are, without anyone in particular being to blame for them.

We give you our word for it, however, that this project of the Railway Clerks under the leadership of President George Harrison and his colleagues, was workers education of the soundest and most significant sort.

Seek New Technique

The Railway Clerks, like all our unions, are up against some tough problems. There is the general one of how the appeal of trade unionism

may effectively be presented to workers today. The methods of an earlier day do not work in an era of Hoover prosperity, radios, airplanes, jazz and what have you. Unemployment, including the new kind of technological unemployment, confronts

them, for machines are replacing the white collar worker as well as the one in overalls. How is an organization going to persuade people to join when it seems helpless to protect them in the job? Labor relations on the railroads are under the regulation of federal law. Representatives of the railroad unions must spend a great deal of time appearing before grievance committees, boards of adjustment, mediation boards and arbitrators, and it is a question of great importance how labor's case may be most effectively presented before such bodies.

Most pressing of all at the moment perhaps is the problem which is connected with railroad mergers and consolidations past and to come. When roads are merged (and sometimes even when they are not) ticket and other offices are consolidated. Even if all the men were kept on this would mean that many would have to move away from places where ticket offices are abandoned, which is often no joke to a man with a family and a home. But, of course, in these consolidations some men are almost invariably dropped. If all the men involved in a consolidation were union members, then you suffer a cut in your membership, and other

clerks not in the union will to some extent be deterred from joining, figuring that the union can't help them retain their jobs anyway. If, as sometimes happens, a union and non-union road merge, you face the terrifying possibility that both roads may become non-union. Even when that danger does not threaten, there is again the chance that unless men get somewhat the better of the bargain in the matter of lay-offs and seniority in consolidations, doubt will arise among unthinking clerks as to the value of the organization.

A Growing Union

Lest anyone conclude from this recital of the difficulties which the Railway Clerks face, that the organization is on the rocks or heading for them, let me hasten to point out that the case is quite the contrary. The Railway Clerks is one of the few trade unions at present experiencing definite and substantial growth. In fact, the record is remarkable—30,000 new members in a period of ten months. When it called a conference on organization, it was not a last-resort affair, a dying man grasping at a straw. It was another step in an adventure-



A session of the four-day conference at the Brotherhood's S. Levi, secretary-treasurer of the Clerks' Union; Frank Rosenblum, president of the Clerks' Union, and A. J. Muste.



Courtesy of "The Railway Clerk"

ters at Cincinnati. In the foreground, left to right, George
st manager, Amalgamated Clothing Workers; George M. Harri-

some, progressive, well-thought-out policy, which gives every promise of bringing still greater results in the future.

The personnel of the conference included grand lodge officers, general organizers, representatives of system boards of adjustment, representatives of local lodges, and a few representatives of sister organizations and visitors. For the information of any deluded souls who may think that an organization carrying out such a progressive program as we are here discussing, must necessarily consist of "foreigners," we might mention that such names as Baldwin, Briceland, Chapman, Dunn, Morgan, Sylvester, O'Brien, Butler, Corcoran, etc., predominate in the list of the clerks who "went to school" in Cincinnati in December!

"Depression is Temporary" —Green

President William Green of the A. F. of L. was the speaker at one of the early sessions of the conference. He brought the greetings of the A. F. of L. and assured the clerks that their organization was regarded as a very important unit in the A. F. of L. In a

survey of the industrial situation, he expressed confidence that the depression "is but temporary and that within a reasonably short time we will emerge and will be back to a normal economic condition in almost every industry in every section of our country." The body of his address was devoted chiefly to the necessity for organization work, including organization among the unskilled and semi-skilled masses. He stated: "We cannot be an exclusive organization with a little group building around us an imaginary wall, believing we are all secure and safe. It is illusion of the worst kind; it is delusion. We must have the man on the outside with us."

Other speakers were Frank Rosenblum, General Organizer of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; Professor William M. Leiserson of Antioch College, leading authority on the subject of arbitration in labor disputes; Herbert S. Bigelow of Cincinnati, who discussed what labor might do if teeth were put into its non-partisan political policy; Gilbert Hyatt of LABOR, the organ of the railroad labor unions, who made a passionate and eloquent plea for support of the Southern organizing campaign; and the present writer, who outlined the development of the labor movement in the United States to date and expressed the belief that we are now entering on a new era of aggressiveness and advance. There was enthusiastic response to the suggestions of the

A Realistic Demonstration of Workers Education

writer as to the kind of Labor Movement we must have in the years before us. First, a fighting movement. Our organizations must be constantly working and fighting to advance the interests of the members, and in turn base their own strength on the fighting spirit and solidarity of the membership and not on the "good will" of the boss. A union which exists basically on the good will of the employer is a company union and not a trade union. Second, the period before us will be a period of consolidation,—much closer coordination among the various unions in a given industry and in the union movement as a whole than we have had. The period of greatest growth in the A. F. of L., from 1898 to 1904, was a period when dozens of craft organizations came together into trade unions. The unions of that period were adapting themselves to the development in industry. We have been going through the biggest period of mergers in our industrial history and we shall have to make the basis of our unions such that we can deal effectively with these super-industries. Third, emphasis must be placed in the coming period on organizing the unskilled and semi-skilled in the basic industries. Fourth, American workers must be made labor-minded. That cannot be done by a movement which at all important points simply echoes big business and the politicians of the old parties. Fifth, we must launch a nation-wide campaign for social insurance against old age, sickness and unemployment. Sixth, we must consider again the question of forming a labor political party with a program sufficiently broad and intelligent to enlist the support of all the progressive and liberal elements in the country.

Finally, the labor movement of the years ahead will have to pay a great deal of attention to technique. The attitude of suspicion toward the economist, the financier, the engineer and the psychologist must go. But business does not think that it is a matter of pride to get along without experts. No one man can have all the brains, intelligence and training. He shows intelligence by the way he can use the brains, intelligence and training of others.

Persuading the "Nons"

To my mind the most significant feature of the conference was a demonstration given by the organizing staff of the methods employed in organizing the unorganized. The organizers were paired off in teams of two each, one assuming the role of the non-union worker, the other the role of organizer. All of the known arguments against trade unions and all of the stock excuses for not joining the union were brought out in these demonstrations. Knowing so well the arguments and excuses that the organizer is confronted with on every hand, the organizers who played the part of the unorganized proved themselves to be the most obdurate of nons and the most difficult to handle. So well did they play their part, in fact, that they were in danger of being thrown out of the conference room. These demonstrations afforded the other organizers and the system board representatives a splendid opportunity to learn the various methods used and gave them valuable ideas to use in their own organizing work. They brought out the various methods of approach, from the friendly, persuasive approach to the non who hasn't previously been solicited to the more belligerent, argumentative tackling of the fellow who has been sitting on the job for years taking advantage of every wage increase and union rule and persistently refusing to join.

Getting the application of the non-member is only the first step in the process of building a labor organization. As important as organizing is, it is no more important than the education and development of the newcomer into the labor movement. Moreover, the work of the organizer in building up the membership is hampered when members for one cause or another drop out of the union. Here the organizers had their inning. "What are you fellows doing to finish and make permanent our work?" they asked of the System Board and Grand Lodge officers. "What are you doing to educate the newcomer in the aims

and objects and ideals of the labor movement and make him a worker in our ranks?" And these questions brought out a long list of collateral questions:

Do the local, division and system committees carry on this educational work after the organizer has worked over a field?

Is there sufficient attention given to the development of local leadership?

Do officers, after serving a period of time, become stale and mechanical in the handling of their duties?

Would it be preferable to assign organizers to specified terminals and allot them specific territory, rather than work them in crews and move them around where organization work is most needed?

Once a system is organized and working under a union agreement is it the business of the organizing staff to continue organizing on such system, or is it the duty of the system organization thereafter to do the organizing?

In conclusion, let us point out some of the reasons why this conference was a genuine and significant project in workers education, in line with the best modern educational procedure, as we asserted at the beginning of this article. In the first place, the conference drew upon the experience of the members of the group itself. It did not base itself primarily on theory or contributions of outsiders. Workers, men of the Labor Movement, got together to pool their own experiences on the job. The conference had its feet on the solid ground of the realities which organizers and officials find they are up against in doing the work of the union.

Criticism Welcomed

In the second place, the conferees approached their problems in a cool impersonal fashion, animated by a real desire to know and to understand. They did not busy themselves orating about what a great Labor Movement we have or passing bouquets to each other. They showed that they were grown up in mind, and not merely in years, by listening in perfect good temper to criticisms by outsiders, and what is perhaps still more remarkable, by members of their own group.

In the third place, they welcomed the information and advice of authorities in various fields for what it was worth. There was no fear of the intellectual or expert or suspicion of him, nor was there any scraping or bowing of the knee to him. He was welcomed as a man among men for

what he could contribute to the pool of experience and testimony.

Fourth, in suggesting the project where some of the "pupils" represented non-members and others impersonated organizers trying to persuade these people to join the union, the conference observed the maxim "learning by doing," used the project method which has been the most significant contribution to educational theory and method of John Dewey and other leading modern educators.

Down to Brass Tacks

Fifth, this was a conference of union men, of workers, not one of those general affairs so fashionable in some quarters where union men and employers, including the open shop and company union kind, get together and pronounce platitudes about their common interests, but never get down to brass tacks. Of course, there is a place for conferences between union representatives and the employers with whom they are in collective bargaining relations, and where they discuss the specific problems which arise under those relations, and seek to arrive at an equitable solution. Under such conditions something like real cooperation is possible because there is power on both sides. That is a very different thing from conferences sometimes called educational, where general economic and labor problems are discussed, and generalizations are aired about the identical interests of capital and labor and the beauties of cooperation, in the presence of open shop, company union employers, not one of whom is converted to recognition of the union by this procedure, while the minds of workers, organized and unorganized, are confused. That their interests are identical with the boss's is precisely what the boss who works them under non-union conditions has been telling them. If labor leaders say the same thing, then why isn't a company union as good as a trade union?

As I have said, this conference on organization of the Railway Clerks was another matter. It was one of those affairs of which there ought to be hundreds these days, in which labor men got together, face up to the tremendous changes taking place in the industrial world, and asked themselves how they could organize workers in the face of these changes, how they could direct union policy in such a way that under these new conditions workers would have the maximum material and spiritual benefit, and the organizations of labor grow in membership, intelligence and effective control in industry.

Following the Fight

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

Help the Southern Drive

A GAIN has the banner of the A. F. of L. been raised, in attack upon the New Slavery that exists below the Mason and Dixon line. By the time these thoughts are in print, 100 organizers will be in the South. That, at least, is the plan. With Birmingham as the seat of their operations, they will attempt the biggest drive at unionization since the Steel Strike of 1919.

To say that this drive is of vital importance is merely to repeat a truism. The South is the land of the \$9 a week maker of Camel cigarettes. It is covered with the hovels of \$15 a week textile workers. In literature for anti-union employers, it has been glowingly referred to as an inexhaustable reservoir of cheap and docile labor. The demands of the Gastonia and Marion strikers were more than modest, judged by Northern standards. These demands were met with bayonets and bloodshed. Aside from the question of liberty and decency, Northern manufacturers are constantly harping upon the South as the source of competition, which compels them to ask constantly increasing wage cuts. Workers, North and South, have much at stake in the outcome of the present campaign. In some industries, it is not going too far to say that they have almost "all" at stake.

Sinclair Lewis puts the case graphically in his pamphlet, "Cheap and Contented Labor," issued by the United Textile Workers of America. It is the story of Marion. Every unionist can afford the "two bits" which will bring it to him. In biting words Lewis puts that story, and we will quote a few paragraphs that strike home:

"I am told that the Marion Chamber of Commerce desires publicity. I want to give it all the publicity I can. I want to add to the much-hymned glories of the South the spectacle of Marion—the spectacle of genuine Native White Americans, undefiled by non-English blood for generations, living and working under conditions as bad as those of Negro slavery before the Civil War.

"... I do want every fall and winter visitor to Asheville to drive over—oh, an hour will do it; an hour will take them from luxury to inferno—and see for themselves the houses and the people of the Marion Manufacturing Co. and the Clinchfield Mills.

"And it would only have been reasonable to insist that before he went home, Ramsay MacDonald should have gone to Marion, to see what our American democracy and honor and justice really are. He would have found in Marion a standard of life and government much worse than the worst feature of the cotton mills in Lancashire and Yorkshire."

These dark clouds of the South cast their shadows over the Northern worker. He must awaken and realize this. The canonization of official murder has already taken place in Pennsylvania. The North has its Sheriffs of the Oscar Adkins type and it has its reactionary employers of

the Baldwin variety. The continuance of slavery in the South will encourage them—as it has indeed done before this—to aim at similar conditions. Self-defense, if no higher emotion, clamors for whole-hearted assistance to the A. F. of L. at this hour.

As Lewis reminds us, with Shavian humor: "The South will welcome your money for strike relief, for they have made it clear that they welcome all Northern capital!" The A. F. of L. campaign fund for the South will welcome your cooperation. Progressive laborites have aided to make the Southern drive a reality, by crying out for action. Now that action is forthcoming, it is a duty for them to throw all their energies into the business of raising money for the fight. In their labor unions, they can well afford to discuss the Southern question, doing all in their power to get action by their locals that will swell the needed funds.

Liberals and radicals, likewise, have a solemn obligation in the present crisis. They have done well in previous appeals, particularly through the Emergency Committee for Strikers Relief. Now is the time for an even more extensive giving. Battles such as must develop in the South cannot be waged without money. That is the urgent need. We must all see that lack of it is not the cause for announcement of the fight. The Marion martyrs, from their humble graves, silently plead for a bit of sacrifice on our part, that will bring their dream of a free Southland nearer to reality.

ST. HERBERT'S HAIR SHIRT

A MERICAN humoristic literature continues to be enriched by the contributions of Herbert Hoover.

On the morning of January 13th, the sturdy citizen read, at his breakfast table, the unique letter of the President to Dr. Thompson of Ohio State University. The man in the White House waxed eloquent over his trials and tribulations. He referred to the hair shirts worn in the Middle Ages "by way of reminder of sin and trouble," and suggested that one in the Presidency had many "mental hair shirts" with which partisan opponents sought to equip him.

He did not add that hair shirts were sure medieval methods of attaining to perfection. Those who wore them did so for their sins—and became saints. But that was probably understood; for the tinted light of stained glass shed itself all over Herbert's letter.

The chief hair shirt that our St. Herbert seems to be wearing is the Julius Barnes extra-legal group of assistants to the government. He mentioned boards and their value and the use the high-minded citizen can be in sitting on such boards and special commissions. Yes, it was Julius Barnes that was on his conscience.

That was a sin for which Herbert should wear a couple

of hair shirts plus a few flour sacks. Barnes and he have not pulled so well together, and that has caused a little hitch or two in the program. But it will go on to completion. The government now has a Big Business group of Fascists, cooperating in the performance of governmental functions.

It is another blunder of Labor that no note of protest from the A. F. of L. has been heard against this sort of super-government, that will develop in time and become a menace to democratic ways and means. When all the shouting is over, it may be said that it was a superb piece of hocus-pocus that was pulled over on the nation's citizenry. The gigantic public works that hit the front pages of the newspapers day by day, were merely the general programs of construction already decided upon by the big interests. They were announced as some new miracle.

At the Fur Workers' convention, Edward F. McGrady of the A. F. of L. declared that some of the big industrialists went out of the Hooverian conference and cut wages within a half hour. Over 49 large concerns, he averred, had failed to live up to "the promise to the President." A national survey, which we trust that *LABOR AGE* will make, would show, we wager, that wage cutting is going on more merrily than ever. The whole show at the White House was B-U-N-K, pure and simple. The pure handed it out, and the simple swallowed it.

Public works, much more extensive than those yet breathed from the White House, will aid to cure unemployment, but only in small part. You will not get very far putting an East Side tailor at dam building. He will probably never reach the dam site. Unemployment insurance sounds much better, and is the suggestion which St. Herbert and his fellow-conspirators walk all around.

It is Labor that must bring forward the unemployment insurance issue. It follows logically upon the stand of the A. F. of L. favoring old age pensions. We look forward wistfully to a bold come-out on the part of the next A. F. of L. convention for this urgent social reform. Of the least of its virtues is that it is a mighty handy piece of propaganda, to affect favorably the unorganized.

ENJOINING THE PUBLIC

ANOTHER Hooverian sin is the rub-a dub-dub connected with the Law Enforcement Commission. With coast guard hot shots and the merits and demerits of Prohibition we are not now concerned. That discussion can be left to Heywood Broun, Nicholas Murray Butler, John Haynes Holmes and other experts on poison alcohol.

The nibbling away of the right to trial by jury is something else again. The Crime Commission is getting dangerously near to perpetrating crimes on its own account. One of the most flagrant was its refusal to discuss the criminal actions of the courts against the working population. It is the courts which are one of the most abundant sources of "disrespect for Law."

What respect for "Law" can any honest man have when he sees the decisions that are handed out today? Let us take a look at the Nazareth injunction, now made perpetual. (January 13th). The court holds there that the "yellow dog" contract is in itself sufficient grounds for injunction, even if the union's efforts are solely to arouse public opinion. "The public are in the same position as

the defendant," sayeth the court. To make it brief, the existence of the "yellow dog" contract means that you cannot discuss conditions existing in a mill, no matter how inhuman they may be, and cannot bring them to the attention of the public. Nor can you carry on a campaign of public enlightenment which has as its aim the abrogation of the "contract" by the company itself, under pressure of public opinion.

Judge R. C. Stewart of the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County is a likeable personality, as a man. You are attracted to him by his dry sense of humor. But in this opinion he has struck a blow at freedom and decency that is serious and challenging. It smacks too much of the Grundy philosophy. If upheld upon appeal, it re-establishes slavery—bringing it to a state, ironically, which did as much as any to "underground railway" Negro slaves to freedom and thus to break the "Law" of the pre-Civil War period.

Incidentally, the company's request was heeded and the injunction now is aimed solely at two organizers, one of whom is out of the situation.

LIDS OFF TO L. I. D.

WHILE upon this subject of Nazareth, we wish to say a few appreciative words about the League for Industrial Democracy. The L. I. D. deserves more than that, and labor unions should be awake to the aid that the students allied with it can give in industrial disputes.

Not only are the Nazareth strikers beset by the court. There is also the Sheriff of Northampton County and the Chief Burgess of Nazareth. For a time the former rested upon his laurels, which consisted of arresting little girls of 15 and 16 years of age and throwing them into the Northampton County Prison overnight. When the Sheriff found himself arrested for assaulting a passing citizen with a night stick, he quit. But another rash hit him, and a few days prior to the injunction decision he began again.

The PHILADELPHIA RECORD quickly dubbed him "the North Carolina Sheriff," in memory of Marion. For Sheriff Snyder threw tear gas, held small girls for "riot," arrested a local contractor who had nothing to do with the dispute, and held a 15-year old girl in prison all night, contrary to State law. Suits for false arrest poured in upon him. But he kept at it, the new Chief Burgess aiding and abetting him.

Then it was that the students from Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore and the University of Pennsylvania came in and took to picketing. The L. I. D. was responsible for that. Of course, it has been done before, but nowhere with more effect than at Nazareth. The Sheriff told them that "nice people like they were" should not picket, and that the girl students were "too nice" for such things. In a word, he intimated that the striking workers, whom he had been manhandling, were of different clay from the students. Of course, that made a deep impression upon the citizens of Nazareth. Arrests have ceased since then, and it looks as though they will not be resumed. The right to picket seems established.

At the same time, discussion of the labor problem in the three colleges has increased as never before, as a result of this little expedition of a few of the students. Therefore, it was not the workers alone who benefited by the experiment.

Progressive Cause

Advances

WITH one month into the new year the various branches of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, as well as the national organization, are consolidating their forces and establishing permanent procedures for effective continuous activity. To cover hastily the developments in the national C. P. L. A. first, mention may be made of the reception of the new LABOR AGE. On every hand the January issue was greeted with warm approval and the many changes instituted were welcomed with much interest.

Joseph Gilbert, former editor of the NEBRASKA CRAFTSMAN of Lincoln, Nebraska, finds the improvement commendable.

"Have just received LABOR AGE for January," he writes, "and wish to state it appears greatly improved in every respect, both in form and contents."

Vida Scudder of Wellesly, Mass., is even more enthusiastic. "The January LABOR AGE pleased me more than any previous number," is her comment.

And so expressions of general satisfaction, both verbal and written, keep coming in. We hope that this issue is equally satisfactory, if not more so. The staff will work hard to make future numbers even more interesting and informative. C. P. L. A.ers can now go out for LABOR AGE subscribers with confidence that the magazine they are backing will fully meet the expectations of new readers.

In addition to LABOR AGE the Conference for Progressive Labor Action is issuing a mimeographed bulletin called THE PROGRESSIVE MID-MONTHLY which had its inaugural release on January 15. Coming as it does in between the publication of LABOR AGE, it helps keep C. P. L. A.ers informed of the activities of the Progressives. Those who are not receiving the mid-monthly should ask to be placed on the mailing list. It is free.

THE PROGRESSIVE MID-MONTHLY will include any news of local branches of the C. P. L. A. or general items that may be of interest to our members. Appoint yourself a press committee of one to supply the bulletin with important news items.

II.

The Chairman of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, A. J. Muste, was invited to make the principal address at the first annual celebration and installation of officers of the New Bedford, Mass., Women's Trade Union League. The League was founded in January, 1929. Its pioneer year was very successful under the

ELECTED PRESIDENT



ANDREW J. KENNEDY
Treasurer of C. P. L. A., is the new international president of the Amalgamated Lithographers of America.

leadership of Mrs. Aurelia Le Beau who has now retired from the presidency but continues her activities as chairman of the League's organizing committee. A large gathering turned out to witness the ceremonies and to listen to A. J. Muste. The speaker's criticism of Hoover's regime was hailed with vociferous approval by those present. Most of the workers in New Bedford are wondering about the authenticity of the careful planning of the President as more than 50 per cent of the textile operatives in New Bedford are without work. They are looking to the success of the Southern organizing drive as holding out more

hope to them than the President's big business charm commission.

The chairman also visited New Haven where he spoke at the open forum of the Central Labor Union. His topic was "The Significance of the Southern Organizing Campaign to the Future of the American Labor Movement."

Tom Tippet, on his way to Illinois for a first hand survey of the situation in that important area, dropped off at Buffalo, N. Y., where he spoke to several groups, among which was included the Buffalo Branch of the C. P. L. A. A more extended report of this meeting is made a little later in the story.

Israel Mufson, Executive Secretary, visited Paterson, N. J., several times where with the assistance of Carl Holderman, Vice-Chairman of the C. P. L. A. and District Organizer of the American Federation of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, an affiliated branch of the United Textile Workers, plans are being drawn up for the formation of a local branch of progressives. Incidentally, Holderman is now busy teaching a recalcitrant hosiery factory owner, manufacturer of Mutual Hosiery, the only Paterson hosiery employer who refuses to do business with the union, that rather than fight the hosiery knitters it pays to recognize the union. Holderman is waging one of the prettiest strikes ever conducted in this much strike ridden city. A photo on another page of this issue under "Flashes From the Labor World" will convince the readers of the resourcefulness of our vice-chairman.

Other speakers continued to present the progressive program before a large assortment of interested groups.

III.

The New York Branch of the C. P. L. A. has outlined an ambitious program which when carried out will bring the message of unionism to the very factory gates of the unorganized New York workers. Its executive committee has mapped out a plan of action for the coming months to hold open air meetings before many of the factories of the Gotham city. In addition street meetings will be held in the working class sections of the

Metropolis at which the need for organization will be stressed.

The membership committee of the Branch under the efficient leadership of Louis Stanley, its chairman, is digging out progressives from every nook and cranny of the local varied industries and is holding special meetings for each group representing a specific trade. He has already organized groups among the needle and building trades and is now after the printing, and metal trades. Every time chairman Stanley walks into the meeting hall of the New York Branch, a group of his specially organized tradesmen are sure to follow.

At the last meeting of the New York Branch the special discussion centered around the problems in the building trades industry. Fred Gaa, well known in New York labor circles and delegate from the Painters' Union to the local Central Labor Union, led off the discussion and soon the painters, carpenters, tile layers and iron workers jockeyed each other for an opportunity to express their sentiments. By unanimous opinion, it was the liveliest meeting the local held.

The meeting recommended to the Executive Committee that a mass meeting be held on the subject of old age pensions and unemployment. The theatre benefit committee, of which Jennie D. Carliph is chairman, feels optimistic about the success of the party, the net proceeds of which are to go to LABOR AGE. The benefit will be held on Tuesday, February 4, the play being one of the most talked about of those now on Broadway, "Death Takes A Holiday."

In Buffalo the Branch held a very successful meeting on the 13th at which Tom Tippet was the main speaker. Brother Long, chairman of the C. P. L. A. and organizer for the Molders Union, is out to make the whole town trade union conscious. He proposed a plan to the Buffalo Central Labor Union that it distribute posters throughout the city bearing the refrain, "Join Your Labor Union." Because of the general apathy prevailing among the organized workers it is difficult for any particular union which desires to enter into an organization campaign, to make very much headway.

The Buffalo Branch has elected its membership committee which is planning to go after new members by carefully combing every list of prospects it can lay its hands on. New members are being affiliated regularly.

Research information is being collected on general industrial conditions such as unemployment and trade union

activity. A survey is being made by the Branch on the relation of the Negro worker to industry and the labor movement. A legislative committee is being organized to obtain data and to disseminate information on legislation, such as old age pensions and the use of injunctions in labor disputes. Its purpose is to stimulate trade unions for action on social legislation. The Branch is preparing a fitting reception to Chairman A. J. Muste when he addresses its February meeting.

Chairman Joseph Schwartz of the Philadelphia C. P. L. A. Branch forwards a program of local activities which should become a classic in C. P. L. A. programs. In the first place over seventy good men and women are now members of the Philadelphia group. A committee on action has been organized which will recommend to the next meeting the following program:

1. The distribution of C. P. L. A. literature at forums and union meetings.
2. The holding of meetings twice a month.
3. That a research committee be organized to collect facts.
4. That dues of 25 cents a month be paid to the local.
5. To give publicity to current labor events with an eye to dramatizing the unemployment situation.
6. To launch a membership drive.
7. Action to be launched towards employing every member of the C. P. L. A. on specific work. Individuals will be trained for leadership in order to develop an intelligent and capable group.

We ought to be hearing of big things from Philadelphia on the basis of the above program.

Effective work is being done by the Pittsburgh C. P. L. A. with special reference to its educational work. It is conducting classes for workers on the basis of the present industrial developments and the students are using C. P. L. A. literature, its pamphlets and issues of LABOR AGE, as effective texts. The local is backing the taxicab drivers who are out for organization. An agreement negotiated by the teamsters' representative and Secretary of Labor Davis was repudiated by the strikers.

A group from the steel industry is now meeting regularly to analyze the situation in that open shop stronghold and to lay plans for action that will center around organization. Chalmers reports that there is no difficulty in getting the ear of steel workers.

Only the fear of company stool pigeons prevents quick action. As it is, in spite of the buzzing of spies who are as thick as flies, the number of workers willing to listen to organization is gradually increasing.

From Seattle, Wash., comes the news that the Seattle Labor College, the center of the C. P. L. A. activities in that section of the woods, is issuing a labor monthly edited by Carl Brannin. The paper's platform is the platform, in the main, of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action. The points are:

1. Organization of the unorganized along industrial lines and amalgamation

THE EMPLOYED



Drawn for Labor Age by Herbert Hensley.

of craft unions into departmentalized industrial unions.

2. An independent political party of farmers and workers.

3. Five day week, higher wages, old age pensions, workmen's compensation and unemployment insurance.

4. Recognition of the Soviet Union.

5. International labor solidarity and opposition to militarism and imperialism.

6. Militant unionism instead of business unionism.

7. Public ownership of public utilities, municipal or state.

8. Workers education based on broad, progressive lines.

This program should bring together all progressive workers, whether organized or not, on the Pacific coast and stimulate action for C. P. L. A. organization.

IV.

The Labor Party in England, plus the sad harvest of the non-partisan political policy of the American Federation of Labor is arousing interest in a Labor Party among American workers as it has never been aroused before. In addition to the labor parties formed in Niagara Falls, Buffalo and New Bedford, reported in previous issues, news of new local parties either in the process of organization or already formed comes into the C.P.L.A. office practically with every mail. Requests for information come from Vermont and Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The latest group to go into practical politics on an independent basis, are the Butte, Montanaponents for independent political boys. Among the most outspoken ex-

ponents for independent political action in Butte is Charles W. Gardner, a fighting member of the C. P. L. A.

To turn to a situation that one can get no enthusiasm out of as one can out of the progress towards a Labor Party, the increasing praise showered on business unionism is something of concern to those who have an advanced labor movement in mind. Hitherto the philosophy of business unionism was of vague outline, the general implications losing themselves in broad phrases about keeping the movement free from idealists and idealism. The advent of the Broach era, however, has glorified business unionism beyond all expectations and has led trade unionists to envisage a movement run along the lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad, to point concretely to an example.

No one has any quarrels with the desire to run a union efficiently. The business of the union should be run on efficient lines, of course. But when the whole process of trade unionism is made a process of business organization the realization that unionism is a mass movement and not a profit organization is lost sight of and weird results follow. At an International Convention recently it was suggested that all previous procedures be abolished and that Executives be appointed, the chief one to receive a salary of \$50,000 annually and to be chosen from a leading business institution. Organizing the South on such lines would take a longer time than it takes light to travel from the furthestmost star. May be it was this tendency which prevented the A. F. of L. from

doubling its membership in 1929.

There is a more insidious side to this whole idea, however. And it crops out here and there to the dismay of trade unionists who really are interested in effective organization. Business unionism certainly is responsible for the development of the business psychology among workers and, more, among the leaders of workers. If the union is a business then according to business standards the best leader is he who gets the highest salary, wears the best clothes, plays the best golf and lives in the best house. From that to the fear of discovery of any alliance with those who get little pay, wear poor clothes, play no golf and live in cheap homes, is inevitable. That this conclusion is no pipe dream is evidenced by this remarkable piece of news that is printed in the columns of THE FEDERATION NEWS, the weekly paper of the Chicago Federation of Labor.

In reporting a regular business meeting of that body, the FEDERATION NEWS quotes a delegate as saying:

"... Then there are some of our so-called trade unionists, who live in 'swell' neighborhoods, in hotel apartments and they don't want the plebian 'Federation News' delivered to them. They want to pretend that they don't 'labor' for a living. To these we might promise to deliver the paper in the dead of night."

That such a situation can arise among any group of workers even though their numbers may be few, is a sad commentary on the state of unionism in these United States. But if we are bent on businifying trade unionism, we must accept all its implications. Human nature will spread out as far as it can in accordance with the permissibilities of its institutions. We are sure that H. H. Broach, in advocating his type of business unionism, abhors such consequences as the Chicago Brother depicts. But willingly or not, business unionism must stand responsible for the business type of mind it is sure to develop.

And, finally, it is our great pleasure to announce that the treasurer of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, A. J. Kennedy, long a faithful servant of his union and as faithful to the progressive cause—faithfulness to one automatically suggests faithfulness to the other—has within the past month been elevated to the International presidency of his organization. All progressives extend to him their best wishes with the hope that under his advanced leadership his organization will prosper.

THE UNEMPLOYED



Drawn for Labor Age by Herbert Hensley.

C. P. L. A. Statement on President Hoover's "Economic Planning"

The following statement, issued by the Research and Publications Committee of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, is an answer to the avalanche of propaganda coming from the White House under the guise of "Economic Planning," which is confounding many into the belief that the present depression is adequately considered and scientific plans against similar future occurrences are being drawn up. The statement is a general review of our economic status preliminary to more detailed suggestions to be advanced later. Together they are to comprise "the program for labor during periods of depression," in which in addition to the C. P. L. A. Research and Publication's Committee, an Advisory Committee consisting of Professors Paul F. Brissenden and Rexford Guy Tugwell, and Mr. George Mitchell of Columbia University, Stuart Chase, Leland Olds, Mr. Wm. L. Nunn and Dr. Lois MacDonald of New York University; John Fitch, Abraham Epstein and Benjamin Stolberg.

The Hoover administration seeks to persuade the people into the belief that it is planning prosperity. Actually the administration has done little to meet the depression, which, whether it proves to be of major or minor intensity, short or long duration, is at the moment causing intense distress to millions of workers. It, however, has staged a huge publicity stunt in an attempt to influence the mood of business and the public. The steps so far taken cannot appreciably alter the course of events and will contribute little to the prevention of similar and perhaps much more serious crises in the future.

In the first place, if the President had acted as an economic engineer and not as a politician he would have held his conferences on the business situation months before the Stock Exchange crash when the depression in the building and automobile industries was already under way. Instead, he helped to encourage an orgy of speculation along with all those who tried to keep the American people sold on Republican prosperity.

Impressive figures are now circulated

purporting to show the building and construction work to be done in 1930 by both public and private agencies. It would take knowledge which no one can possibly gather in haste to determine just how much of this is really additional to what would have been carried on anyway, and it is only the increase in construction work in 1930 over 1929 that can take up any slack in employment, and no one has arisen to claim that this increase, if any, will assume large proportions.

There is no means of compelling public or private concerns to go through with the pretentious program announced if those in control feel that the business situation does not warrant such a course.

Furthermore, no one knows better than the President himself that it takes a long time to plan construction work, get appropriations passed and make the necessary arrangements for credit. The measures so widely discussed can do little, therefore, directly to increase employment during the early months of this year when distress is not intense. To let the impression stand that these measures will increase employment can only, in the measure that it succeeds, have the effect of shifting attention once more from the main point which is that we must prepare in advance to prevent unemployment, a point which the President himself stressed in his proposal of a "prosperity reserve" a couple of years ago.

The problem of obtaining the funds necessary for the projected construction, whether public or private, really goes to the heart of the question of economic planning. Whether these funds are raised by the flotation of securities by corporations, or by government creation of credit, or out of taxes, the essential fact is that they are funds drawn from other uses to which they might have been put. The possible effects of alternative uses of such funds must be considered.

The only real economic planning today is in the hands of those who control the allocation of funds, that is, credit. A constructive program aiming at the elimination of such recessions as that at present afflicting the country must include consideration of the problem of social control of capital issues and loans of working capital. The present program of emergency construction is based on no comprehensive grasp of this fundamental problem.

From still another standpoint the im-

pression that prosperity is being seriously and scientifically planned by the Federal Government under the President's direction is misleading. For example, only about five per cent of the total budget for public works in the United States is under federal jurisdiction. Ninety-five per cent comes under control of the States and Cities. Whether there will be action depends largely, therefore, upon the exigencies of politics and the scheming of politicians. This is not economic engineering.

Again, there is no committee or commission under the direct control of the Federal government dealing with the present depression and with the problems emerging from the new developments in industry. What the President has done is to hand things over to the United States Chamber of Commerce and to various leaders of big business. They are to do the planning for the nation and, designedly, or not, the prestige of the government is placed behind them. Thus the appointment of a genuine government commission like the Commission on Industrial Relations just before the war, for example, which was representative in its composition and held public hearings in various cities and gave all sorts of individuals and interests a chance for a hearing is forestalled. If we were indeed approaching our problem in a mature spirit and by scientific methods, we should face facts and have them laid before the people, as Miss Frances Perkins, New York State Industrial Commissioner, recently pointed out in her challenge to President Hoover.

Social engineering, real planning for the general welfare, would have meant emphasis upon the fundamental problem of distributing the national income in such a way as to increase the purchasing power of the masses of people, for example, social insurance against the risks of old age, sickness and unemployment; shortening the hours of labor; abolition of child labor (if children under 16 were eliminated from industry one million jobs would be available at once); serious grappling by the national government with our notorious "sick" industries such as coal, textiles suffering from the evils of unrestrained competition, over equipment and overproduction, and the utter failure of private enterprise; genuine advance planning of public works; and measures for control of credit, in line with a sound social policy.

The March of the Machine

By JUSTUS EBERT

SOMETHING to think about is world machine output. The leading industrial countries are busy filling the world with machinery. During the pre-war period, for instance, Germany was turning out about one-fifth of the machine output of the world. Now, Germany's share of the world's output, according to Dr. H. Parker Willis, an authority, "is probably in the neighborhood of pre-war proportions." With Great Britain, Germany and the United States actively saturating the world with machines, the result will be an international displacement of labor, with its attendant economic and social problems for the nations of the world.

* * *

Machines tend to make morons necessary. "We need morons in industry," Dr. R. N. Bond told vocational experts meeting in New Orleans, "to do work that we don't want to do." He instanced the operation of various types of power machinery where girls with the mentality of a six-year old were more efficient than college graduates.

* * *

Henry Jager, in *THE NEW VIEW*, calls the displaced worker, "Mr. Useless." That's the way many displaced workers feel about themselves, they're useless. (See the suicide record.) But it's rarely that the employer who causes them such depressing feelings, addresses them so politely. His language is considerably less considerate.

* * *

Harry W. Laidler, in his pamphlet on "Unemployment," declares, "It has been estimated there has been a decrease of about 2,300,000 during the last eight years in the number of persons employed in the four major industries — farming, manufacturing, railroading and mining." And the machine, accompanied by its boon companion, mergers, shows no signs of discontinuing its activities among these industries. What, then, are the next eight years likely to bring forth—the displacement of another 2,300,000? Or more? Velocity gains with impetus.

The belief that the four main industries can reduce labor forces by 2 or 3 million more workers seems ridiculous. But read this about farming:

Increased use of farm machinery is reducing production costs with less man power, according to S. H. McCrory, chief of the agricultural engineering division, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

"The average agricultural worker could care for but 12 acres of crops, 75 years ago," said Mr. McCrory. "Now, considering the United States as a whole, he can attend to at least 34 acres, and in some States where large power units are common the average is more than 100 acres, while on many individual farms it will run as high as 300 acres or more."

Imagine the result when this tendency becomes complete.

* * *

Machine arguments change as the results of machine introduction accumulate. Years ago the belief then advanced that machinery displaced labor was strenuously opposed. It was then asserted instead that the machine saved labor. Now, however, the machine so vividly ousts labor that its displacement function is no longer denied. Other things also once denied may logically follow. One of them is an increasing sentiment in favor of the social ownership and control of the machine. Even that, some day, will be so obvious, as no longer to admit of further opposition.

* * *

Seven thousand union musicians—2,000 of them organists—have been rendered jobless by sound pictures. The latter have also affected legitimate actors and movie proprietors adversely, causing loss of employment to the first and discontinuation of houses to the second.

* * *

The new industries as absorbers of displaced labor seem to be suffering from indigestion just now. That is, their powers of absorption seem sur-



Locomotive Engineers' Journal.

Caught by the sweep of the machine.

feited and acting in reverse order. There's radio, for instance. Newer than autos, its workers in New York, according to the Federated Press, are faced with more than the usual seasonal unemployment.

* * *

"Workers are being displaced faster than they can be absorbed by other branches of industry," says John Walker Rogers, deputy labor inspector of Kentucky, in his study, "The Elder Worker, Restricted Employment, Annuities, Relief."

Mr. Rogers says the displacement of workers over 40 years of age by younger men "is a problem that tends to become daily more acute, more extensive and more difficult of solution," and that this practice "will become a general policy in the industrial world."

* * *

The machine is being developed beyond the capacity to consume. This creates another unfavorable condition not much emphasized, namely part-time employment. In coal mining, particularly, part-time employment is so customary as to be the rule rather than the exception. One and a half-day's work a week is quite frequent in the coal mines. This means virtually a labor displacement of four and a half days a week. It is time more attention was paid to part-time employment as created by machine overdevelopment. This condition is becoming too general.

Flashes from the Labor World

The long heralded southern organization campaign of the American Federation of Labor is under way. Its opening was marked by six speeches delivered by Pres. Green in Birmingham, Memphis, Knoxville, Nashville, Asheville and Richmond. In a second tour he will cover the principal cities of the Carolinas and Georgia.

From Pres. Green's speeches, as reported by Federated Press, it is apparent that he made an aggressive bid to southern cotton mill owners and other employers to accept the cooperation of organized labor in stabilizing southern industries and increasing the home consuming markets. Those who believed he would offer the A. F. of L. as the lesser of two evils, conservative or radical labor, found they were mistaken. Instead, the A. F. of L. chieftain argued that southern employers had everything to gain in recognizing organized labor through gaining the cooperation of unionism in correcting evils of the south, namely, over-production, low wages and long hours. The A. F. of L., far from being the lesser of two evils, was pictured as a positive force which meant higher profits for the mill owners and higher wages for the wage earners.

Whether southern employers, with the regard of Marion, Gastonia and Elizabethton, in lynching, jailing, kidnapping and mistreating labor organizers, will see the point to Pres. Green's appeal, remains to be seen. Certainly he made it plain to them that their refusal to cooperate with the conservative labor federation means leaving the way open for the Communists and the Natl. Textile Workers.

* * *

Few more illuminating examples of the prejudice and bias of American journalism toward business and against the interests of the vast majority of workers and farmers can be cited than its treatment of the unemployment crisis. Every utterance of a national business or political pundit concerning the "basic soundness of conditions" and the early return of prosperity has been played on the front pages. But the vast and tragic story of the loss of jobs by millions of workers and the collapse of farm crop prices has been relegated to inside pages, if not entirely ignored.

Indeed, the commercial press, described by Editor & Publisher as becoming more and more a "vehicle for advertising to the eclipse of its other functions," has treated the entire industrial depres-

sion in the light of declining dividends. A hundred times more concern has been expressed about diminished profits than about diminished employment. While all the great minds from Hoover down to the president of the Rotary Club of Puyallup have been bent on the problem of bringing back the halcyon days of stock market speculation, but few voices outside labor's ranks have been heard on unemployment insurance and relief.

DRAMATIZING A STRIKE



F. P. Photo.

Paterson hosiery workers demonstrate that they want freedom—through the union.

Mass violation of anti-picketing injunctions has long been on the program of the labor movement, but it is left to the Hosiery Workers Federation, to prove that that is the only method of assuring workers' rights in strikes. In brilliant strikes in Nazareth, Pa., and Philadelphia, the knitters once again carry labor's banners into the employer's trenches. At the Kraemer strike in Nazareth, where Editor Louis Francis Budenz of LABOR AGE is devising union strategy, college students successfully defied the ban on picketing. While Sheriff Snyder chewed his mustache, coeds from the University of Pennsylvania and Swarthmore paraded in front of the mill. Since then, reports Budenz, arrests of strikers have stopped. Scabs are

called scabs, despite injunctions and strikebreakers listen to labor songs of solidarity, sung by the mill side.

* * *

In 27 years, reports Editor John W. Edelman of the Hosiery Worker to Federated Press, Philadelphia courts have granted every application for a labor injunction save one. The Aberle mill strike was no exception, and the 1,400 strikers were named in a court order which would have made them sit at home reading Judge McDevitt's favorite scab papers. But so contagious is the strikers' enthusiasm that neighbors in the vicinity of the Aberle mill insist on standing around watching the scabs. They are not strikers, and are not included in McDevitt's injunction. Wrathful, the scab judge ordered the cops to disperse Philadelphia citizens intent on their own business—that of seeing that hosiery workers' wages are not reduced by judicial fiat.

* * *

Must workers in the air industry be divided into a dozen jealous crafts, or will the A. F. of L. allow them to form one strong industrial union? This is an important question, posed just as the air industry gets under way for a career, which will undoubtedly see a million workers in the not too distant future.

The stock market crash brought down the paper valuation of air stocks from \$1,000,000,000 to about \$250,000,000, the most drastic slash in the whole list of absurdly inflated stock values. The big manufacturing and flying companies immediately retaliated—in the interest of profits—by imposing a drastic slash on their own workers. In the New York district pilots were cut to a maximum of \$3,600 and throughout the country wages tumbled. In the airplane and engine factories, thousands of workers were laid off or put on part time.

The response to this is an effort to found a national industrial union of all air workers, from the women who sew the fabric on plane wings and the mechanics in the engine factories, to the aristocrats of the industry, the men who fly the great air liners. Dale (Red) Jackson, holder of the world's endurance record, is back of this move. The A. F. of L. on the other hand is chartering a few federal local unions, and international unions are stretching forth jurisdictional claims for crafts. It needs little argument to see that an Air Workers Union will be worth all the little warring craft unions that can be formed.

RETURN TO THE PICKET LINE



Arrest and detention in Northampton County (Pa.) prison overnight cannot stop girl strikers—Josephine Kaczor, strike leader, fourth from right.

The standard labor histories say that Philadelphia workers organized the first labor party in this country in 1928. They will have to revise that though, for the existence of a labor party in Charleston, S. C. in 1768 has just been discovered, according to Federated Press. Charleston then was more important than New York as an industrial center and not far behind Boston and Philadelphia. Its mechanics put up a labor ticket in 1768 and elected Christopher Gadsden, the radical anti-British leader, to the provincial legislature. So disgusted was the Tory governor of South Carolina that he wanted to move the capital from Charleston to "get away from the Liberty Tree and the meddling mechanics who concocted all the mischief under its shade."

* * *

Henry Ford is a smart industrialist, and just as smart a propagandist. His \$6 and \$7 minimum wage announcements have been bruited far and wide in a friendly press, which profits to the tune of millions annually from his advertising. It is left to Federated Press to tell the rest of the story. Many flivver parts are made by other companies. Kelsey-Hayes supplies the wheels from shops where the 12-hour day is rampant. In Kelsey-Hayes, a worker is lucky to get 65c. an hour. Briggs turns out bodies, with nothing said about any \$7 minimum. Here women work in violation of the 8-hour law and accidents are abnormally high. Constant hiring and firing, characteristic also of Ford, have brought Briggs wages to 42c. If you stay longer, you'll get more, and then you'll get fired. A week or so later you go back for 42c.—and glad to get a job.

* * *

The Marion strike is still on. Every once in a while the southern press reports that the strike is over—again. William Ross, in charge of C. P. L. A. educational work in that sector, says that

a casual visit to Marion will convince anyone that the strike is on, with active unionists blacklisted, evicted but still doggedly holding on. More than a thousand persons are on the strike relief list, being handled by the Quakers.

The Paramount Co. has issued two Marion strike phonograph records, the Marion Massacre and The Strike in North Carolina, both sung to old mountain tunes. Neither record is obtainable in Marion itself, whose business section is completely dominated by the mill interests. The records are bootlegged into the town.

* * *

Trade union officials watch and wonder as Pres. H. H. Broach of the Electrical Workers continues to elaborate his philosophy of trade unionism. Amazement, incredulity, and a shudder along the backbone greet his words. For example: "Sloppiness, filth, laziness and

drunkenness have no place in this organization. . . . So far as those representing the International are concerned, two things will not be tolerated—drunkenness and laziness. I believe we have some good men, doing excellent work. Certain ones should be pensioned. Others should be given a chance to do better. Others have had all the chances they deserve." The officials read, and thank God they're not in the Electrical Workers Brotherhood!

* * *

Among the contradictions of capitalism, not the least amusing is that between the Natl. Industrial Conference Board and the American Newspaper Publishers Assn. To the board, the 5-day week is an interesting development in labor and industrial technique, generally successful where introduced and by no means a burden of such industries. While it does not say that the 5-day week will solve any problem, the board is emphatic that the reform was neither inspired by Moscow nor by enemies of American business.

But to the A. N. P. A. the 5-day week is ruinous and "uneconomical"—whatever that is. In national conventions, and in all the petty state conventions of publishers, it is necessary now to call the 5-day week by all the choice epithets that come so naturally to the business men in charge of the nation's press. All that does not deter the printers and photo engravers unions in New York City from pressing forward for the 40-hour week. The photo engravers, after a lot of nonsense about how foolish strikes are, have finally taken a strike vote. Somehow conferences with the employers, hailed as the only way to get things done nowadays, have proved inconclusive. The boss can always stall in a conference, but a strike vote has a wonderful, electric, thrilling effect on him.

HARVEY O'CONNOR.

The machine is affecting the building industry. Parts are made in factories and put in place on the building. Continuous mechanization affects construction itself, increasing the output and overmanning the industry. This, too, at a time, when building is over-developed. What will be the result? Is the building industry going the way of the coal mining industry, which is also overmanned and over-developed? Will there be a consequent loss of economic power in the building trades unions, just as there has been in the Miners' union? And, if so, what will be the effect on the American Federation of Labor, of which the building trades unions are at present the real backbone?

An important district conference of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action is called for Sunday, March 16, 1930. The sessions will begin at 10 o'clock in the morning.

The tentative program calls for reports from Bill Ross to present the issues involved in the Southern campaign; Tom Tippet to describe the situation in Illinois and its significance to the progressive program; and William Chalmers will relate the present outlook in the steel industry.

Reports from local branches will be taken up at the afternoon session.

All C. P. L. A. Branches and affiliated organizations should send delegates. The official call will be issued shortly.

Do not wait for the official communication but act on this notice at once and advise the national organization of your action.

In Other Lands

GREAT BRITAIN

At a time when Labor politically is strongest and most influential internationally it is the reverse industrially. Instead of aggressiveness one notices a trend toward a consortium with Capital. The historic class war on which the British workers were fed spiritually and trained for two generations and through which they reached their present high place is being set aside by the leadership and the Trade Union Congress General Council.

In the last days of the old year Cook, Citrine and Beard with other prominent trade unionists met with representatives of the National Confederation of Employers' Organizations and the Federation of British Industries. Between them they hammered out a program of action which if carried out will, as the boosters of this new departure say, be a "Parliament of Industry." It is a reactionary step from the Whitley Councils idea and while it may guarantee peace in industry and aid the exporters to hold their foreign markets and thereby check the growth of unemployment it can not bring the workers an inch nearer to the cooperative commonwealth. On the contrary it places the exploiters on firmer ground and gives a sort of labor legality to their plunder. The Herald called it an historic experiment but adds it must not be interpreted to mean that the new departure will supercede the unions or the employers organizations.

The campaign for rationalization is going ahead with leaps and bounds and aside from the plutocrats who have a natural interest in the program since it means stabilization and efficiency plus more dividends the most eloquent advocates are J. T. Thomas and Ben Tillett. Ben, ex-dockworker, rough and ready corduroy dressed M. P., said rationalization of industry was inevitable. A. J. Cook, though taking part in many important conferences of Labor and Capital and who has of late swung towards the extreme right section, is reconsidering his course. He thinks the Trade Unions are giving too much support to capitalist rationalization and amalgamation which were, he said, mainly financial in operation. Cook stated, and he must know, that the schemes were used to exploit the workers by reducing wages, destroying effective unionism, creating large scale unemployment and breaking all decent customs and conditions in the sacred cry of efficiency. Veering to the Socialist position Cook said a Labor

Party without well organized, scientific trade unions was useless. Announcing his belief in Socialism he demanded a clear majority for the Labor Party at the next election. This is the first clear note from a prominent man in the Labor Party outside of the I. L. P. group which is always socialist in tactics, policy and aim.

In the foreign affairs department MacDonald and his aides have scored most brilliant successes. Henderson, the Premier and Ponsonby have more than redeemed the party's fame and pledges. A peace psychology has been created all

are opposing MacDonald.

India will be the only danger spot for MacDonald. Egypt seems to be settling down and may accept the Labor proposals. There are a few skirmishes in Africa and Arabia but they are not serious enough to disturb the calm created by the Labor Party all over the world. Australia has lined up with London and so has South Africa. Canada has accepted Labor's plan with reservations. MacDonald may well be proud of his achievements in the domain of foreign politics. It is the brightest spot in the Labor map and will go down in history as the grandest stroke of statesmanship since Canning.

The old age pensions bill is law and the widows especially will benefit by it. So will the children. The other bills of the Labor Party were not so lucky. The unemployed and the Coal Miners bills suffered nearly as much from bad handling as from the opposition. The Coal Mine bill is law and while it is not what was expected and while it almost created a split between the I. L. P. and the Labor Party proper it is a step forward. The consumer, however, will pay for the added costs as the operators have the right of passing the burdens on to the buyers of coal which they will do. Anyway the miners got something out of it all. On the dole to the unemployed Miss Bondfield failed and floundered helplessly. She was forced into the humiliating position of having Stanley Baldwin, the Tory leader, go to her rescue during a parliamentary snarl. This in other instances would have made the minister resign. Chivalry saved Maggie from the Chiltern Hundreds or the private members bench.

Labor Party advocates need not be discouraged by British developments for MacDonald and his aides have been hemmed in on all sides by enemies, limitations of time, the realism of the situation by the party being in an actual minority though seemingly in a majority and the shortage of money with the usual dread of piling on more taxes. It has done wonders for the short time it is in office. One regrets that as they go along they are compelled to repair a system they are fundamentally out to destroy.

INDIA STIRS

This sub-continent is at last getting down to the business of openly contesting the rule of the imperialists and the super-bosses in London. Passive resistance, boycott, Sinn Feinism and strikes are the order of the day. The Oriental

(Continued on page 29)

ANXIOUS MOMENTS



N. Y. Evening Telegram.

Predictions are made that if the British government takes extreme measures in India, causing loss of life, the I. L. P., the radical wing, will break with the Labor Party.

over the country and indeed all over Europe by the Labor Party. Even if the full disarmament program is not accomplished the anti-war feeling and its accompanying good will all around will have taken a permanent hold on the masses of the workers and the middle classes on which the party depends for its votes. The great munition and armament rings are laying low for the nonce but it may be they are letting the peace wave work itself out or blow away. At least that is what they are hoping for. Lord Bridgeman, who wrecked the Geneva conference with the aid of Churchill and not Shearer, has come out against the MacDonald plan. So have the admirals and the Tories. Public opinion seems to be on the side of MacDonald and the reactionaries will be careful not to do anything too rash. A general election at this time would go bad with them, and they know it. Hence the care with which they



"Say It With Books"



THE "SCIENCE" OF LABOR MANAGEMENT

Wertheim Lectures on Industrial Relations, 1928, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 229 pages.

LABOR students will find it worth while to know what some of the leading professors of economics are thinking about on such important questions as business unionism, company unionism, personnel management and others which come within the scope of "Industrial Relations." This reviewer would recommend therefore that they read the Wertheim lectures which were given at Harvard during the academic year 1928-1929. In this volume will be found the addresses made by five college professors as well as those of Otto S. Beyer, Jr. and John P. Frey.

As one reads the book one is impressed by the fact that these professors have none too high an opinion of the present American Labor Movement. Prof. John R. Commons of the University of Wisconsin, for instance, in discussing "Jurisdictional Disputes," points to the unequal labor organization that exists in this country, where in some trades the workers are organized nearly one hundred per cent, and in the bulk of the industries, they are not organized at all, where wages vary from 20 cents to \$1.75 an hour, and working hours from 35 to 70 a week. No such wide fluctuations are to be found anywhere else. Prof. Joseph H. Willits of the University of Pennsylvania relates how the hold of the United Mine Workers on the bituminous coal industry became weakened; whereas operators producing two-thirds of the coal had union agreements in 1921, by 1928 only about 20 per cent of the coal came from mines under union agreements; by no means a compliment to the wisdom of John L. Lewis's policies. Professor William M. Leiserson of Antioch College and Frank W. Taussig of Harvard University, are most outspoken, the former referring to the archaic structure of American trade unions, while the latter speaks of the "ineptitude of leadership—a sort of dry rot in the unions."

While Professors Leiserson and Taussig agree in their estimate of the American Labor Movement as it is today, when they discuss employee representation (company unions) and personnel management, they differ widely. One is amazed to find Prof. Leiserson, regarded as the more liberal, singing the praises of the "passionate" personnel men. Prof. Taussig, on the other hand, calmly declares what every unbiased person will admit that company unions are devices for "circumventing the labor organizations, that they do not constitute industrial democracy and do not ever have as their goal anything like democracy."

This lecture does not enhance Prof. Leiserson's reputation as an unbiased instructor in economics no matter how high his standing may be as an industrial arbitrator. In discussing "Personnel Management" he reminds one of the young man in love who can see nothing but virtue in his beloved. Once started on a description of his "darling" the professor's enthusiasm knows no bounds. Personnel management, he finds, "has contributed in no small degree to the socialization of the attitude of management toward its labor forces," "it has substituted insurance and welfare work in place of blacklists and labor spies." He quotes the notorious open shopper, General Atterbury, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, approvingly and declares that the workers in the company unions are becoming "citizens in industry with rights," if you please. He is not interested, he tells us, in the motives of employers in establishing company unions; their insincerity is quite immaterial. How different, Prof. Taussig, who says, that the sincerity of employers is crucial as theirs is the responsibility.

Can it be that Prof. Leiserson has not read Robert W. Dunn's "Company Unions," the exposes of company unions by Louis F. Budenz in "Labor Age", or the report of the Tri-Church commission which investigated the Real Silk Hosiery Company's company union; that he does not know that these employee representation schemes in many cases were in-

stalled with the assistance of labor spies; that the yellow dog contract is an integral part of some of these company union schemes as in the case of the I. R. T.? Let him read about the elaborate spy systems maintained in the Bethlehem plant at Lackawanna, N. Y., of the activities of the MacDonald brothers, the Corporations Auxiliary Co., the Sherman Corporation and then tell us that spies have been eliminated and of the "important contribution" made to industrial relations by company unions.

In fairness to Prof. Leiserson, there is only one way to account for this aberration. He believes that company unions will eventually lead to industrial democracy, no matter what the employers' intentions may have been when they installed them, citing the fact that the first political constitutions of European countries did not provide much democracy but gradually led to more and more control by the people, but this is a far fetched comparison. Prof. Leiserson is unable to present one instance where a company union was transformed into a real union; he cannot show one company union, for instance, which has a strike fund to aid them in case they go on strike for higher wages or for other improved conditions. The only instance on record of a company union revolt was that of the oil workers in Bayonne, N. J., who struck for a few days, threatened to assess themselves for a strike fund, and then went back to work.

Yet, in spite of his raptures over personnel management Prof. Leiserson admits that the weakening of trade unionism is an undesirable consequence, but puts the responsibility for this situation upon Labor itself. "If it is weakened by the activities of personnel management," he warns, "it needs to look to its larger program." Here is a hint for the leaders of labor that they might well ponder over.

Returning to the other lecturers, Prof. Willits tells us that certain thoughtful coal operators today believe that "the almost complete destruction of the union will lead to the rebuilding of this or

some other miner's union. He predicts that such a union will devote more of its attention to research and economic problems. This, coming from a disinterested professor, is another indictment of the Lewis leadership.

Prof. Commons is pessimistic as to the prospect of a successful remedy for jurisdictional disputes. He asserts that in England during the past 20 or 30 years jurisdictional strikes have almost disappeared. Germany does not know what such strikes mean. Over there, he tells us, the class conscious workers prefer to fight their employers rather than their fellow workers.

A somewhat technical though highly informative lecture on the "Maladjustment of the Industrial Worker" is presented by Prof. Elton Mayo, in which he discusses such matters as fatigue, pessimism and morale.

Mr. Beyer fully describes the B. & O. plan and how it came to be inaugurated. No new information is shed on the development of the plan. However, it might be mentioned that Mr. Beyer declares that what is known as "Mondism" in England was copied from the B. & O. plan.

Secretary Frey of the Metal Trades Department devoted most of his lecture to citing a number of instances in the collective bargaining experience of the Molders Union, with which union he was long connected. He shows that the molders employers association has for a long time been quite reasonable in its dealings with the union, but these amicable relations did not develop, we should remember, until there had been a good many strikes and lockouts and the employers had learned to respect the power of the Molders Union.

Mr. Frey argues for voluntary relations between employers and workers and objects strenuously to legislative or executive interference. It is remarkable, however, that when President Hoover resorted to "executive interference" persuading Mr. Frey and other labor leaders not to demand higher wages during this "emergency" Mr. Frey raised no objection. On the other hand, when the resolution for old age pensions was voted on at the A. F. of L. Convention at Toronto, Mr. Frey asked to be recorded against this "legislative interference."

When professors lecture at Harvard the working class is conspicuous by its absence, hence this book is not light reading, but the labor student who is interested in Industrial Problems, "the method by which employers manage their employees" will find it profitable to read these lectures.

LEONARD BRIGHT.

THE PASSING OF A SOCIALIST

The Passing of Normalcy, by Charles W. Wood, B. C. Forbes Publishing Co. \$3.00.

WHEN an author admits that his book is a helter-skelter of more or less passing impressions there is no need to go behind his own honest opinion for something more astute and orderly. The excuse that life is that way cannot save him, for it is the province of an experienced observer to do just the opposite, to bring order where confusion abounds and to dovetail the petty chaotic into the greater harmony of larger purposes. What a world this would be if every writer hid behind the skirts of life's seeming incongruities! And just because in "The Passing of Normalcy," Charles W. Wood permits the raucous disharmony of a small town to get the best of him, the book is exactly what it is, a hodge-podge of pseudo-economics, metaphysics and plain balderdash.

But I must not be too hard on the author. If Moses, himself, went up to Mount Sinai to prove that business men care no longer about profits but are insistent devotees of the Great God Service; that the family is going to the dogs because the chain stores are heedless of their communities' interests; and that the chain stores in turn will be bitten by the same howl as if they don't creep out of their sausage skins of national outlook as against local, he never would have come down with the ten commandments. He also, perhaps, would have brought forth a volume similar to Comrade Wood's, and that would have been the end of Moses.

This should be the end of "The Passing of Normalcy" but for old time's sake we shall give the author another paragraph or two. Comrade Wood buckles on his fountain pen and hies forth to Marion, O., to find what Big Business, especially as represented by the chain stores, is doing to love, sex, morality, the old man, the rector, the family, the corner grocery man and the crossing watchman. He finds aplenty. The family, as an economic unit, is disappearing and all because the chain stores wouldn't carry along the regular customer when the old man is without a job. The corner grocery man did and so the family could keep together. But now, with the cold and cruel chain store cash and carry, no money no munchy, and the family disunites. But, says Charlie, since the owners of the chain stores are interested in Service and not Profits, they should heed them-

selves at once and broaden their Service to include a little charity at the right time. This includes buying a ticket now and then for the Ladies' Aid. And also, but very politely, they should increase the pay of their own help. And they will, says Charlie, and the book ends.

Thus passeth another Socialist or has he done passed? Yes, Comrade Wood once was a Socialist. Now he is fifty and editor of Forbe's Magazine—"a magazine for busy businessmen."

ISRAEL MUFSON.

WHAT WE ARE DOING TO A NEGRO REPUBLIC

The Magic Island. By W. B. Seabrook. Harcourt, Brace & Co.

MOST workers used to think that each could look out for himself, that what happened to one fellow in the shop was no concern of the other. They know better now and organize into unions. Most American workers still think, however, that what happens to workers in other countries does not matter to them. That dream also will pass. In the present state of things in the world, what is happening in some South American country today may go a lot farther to determining what your wages and conditions are going to be next year, and whether you are going to have a job at all or are going to be in the army, than are the things happening in your own shop or home.

Because it is so important that we should know what Uncle Sam and his marines are doing in Latin America, this book about Haiti, one of the countries in the Caribbean Sea, over which we established an American protectorate a dozen years or so ago, is worth reading. It tells very vividly how we have brought law and order, sewers, autos, good roads, etc., to the once free Negro republic, but also how "the Americans have taught us a lot of things. Among other things they have taught us that we are Niggers. You see we really didn't know that before, we thought we were Negroes."

Don't think this book is high-brow. It is as fascinating and exciting as a dime novel with funny stories about the shrewdness of Haitian peasants, a brilliant description of a voodoo ceremony, a tale about an American sergeant of marines, who is actually king over an island of primitive Negroes, and a chapter on "dead men working in the cane fields" which is not intended to be but is a gripping parable of how modern industry de-humanizes men, makes automata, "dead men" out of them.

A. J. M.

ORGANIZATION OF NEGRO LABOR

(Continued from Page 11)

ment, American Federation of Labor, continued to hold out even after units of the building trades in a Southern city had decided to give up. Negro mine workers fought the introduction of Negro non-union mine workers in West Virginia as bitterly as white workers did. The history of the longshoreman is replete with instances where white men and black men in cities in the South walked out together and together achieved victory or accepted defeat.

Where stern necessity has driven black and white workers together, there it has been demonstrated that there can be cooperation, there can be a common basis of action, there can be understanding.

No one could expect the American Federation of Labor to destroy race prejudice in industry. It would be foolish to hope that a few magic words spoken from the convention platform would be sufficient to eradicate the accumulated social traditions of American life. But the American Federation of Labor is guilty of negligence and of lack of vision. For, knowing the conditions which ranged black workers and white ones against the other, it has done nothing to develop an entente cordiale. It offered escape to the black workers in the form of federal and local unions, and watched them slowly succumb to the very same forces which necessitated their existence. In an age when racial cooperation is the shibboleth of those who would solve the problems of race, it has disdained to try this simplest and least harmful method of racial understanding—an interracial industrial committee of black and white workers.

What, pray, has the Workers Education Bureau done to promote greater accord between black and white workers? What program does it recommend? What advice does it

proffer to those who face the race problem in industry?

Twelve years ago the National Urban League made a sustained effort to work out a plan of cooperation with the A. F. of L. for the organization of black workers. In 1925 and in 1926 it renewed its efforts, but up to this time its offers have met with a chilly response. Negro leadership outside the ranks of organized labor has been no more successful in securing consideration for black workers than Negro leadership from within.

The 1920 census revealed that almost a million Negroes had entered industry. What the 1930 census will reveal no one knows. But increasing mechanization and rationalization certainly have sounded the death knell to many of the skilled crafts. The skilled job of yesterday may become the unskilled job of today, and tomorrow may utilize the services of two elements which have remained on the fringe of the American Labor Movement because for the most part they

make up that great horde of the unskilled—Negroes and women. A rigidly restricted immigration, plus the increasing simplification of tasks may easily increase the number of Negroes in industry to formidable proportions.

The Negro worker, then, in America is the challenge of Industrial Democracy. And the question still remains. Will the A. F. of L. meet that challenge?

IN OTHER LANDS

(Continued from Page 26)

giant seems awake but too much must not be expected from the Hindoos by Westerners. They are not ready for a revolution in India but they will achieve great and lasting changes that will be progressive. Several eminent leaders were arrested and provincial parliaments have been made useless by the Indians remaining at home and ignoring them. The trouble may be the cause of upsetting Ramsay MacDonald and his government.

PATRICK L. QUINLAN.

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